



## Sicily: Heritage of the World

Edited by Dirk Booms  
and Peter John Higgs

# **Sicily: Heritage of the World**

Edited by Dirk Booms and  
Peter John Higgs

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*Sicily: Heritage of the World*

Edited by Dirk Booms and Peter John Higgs

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Front cover: Mount Etna, source of the island's agricultural fertility, towers over Lago Pergusa, in antiquity thought to be one of the entrances to the underworld

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# Introduction

Dirk Booms and Peter John Higgs

The island of Sicily lies at the heart of the Mediterranean. Since ancient times to the present day it has been a hub of migration and settlement for different peoples. From the earliest encounters between the indigenous peoples of the island and incomers, looking for raw materials or new places to trade or settle, to the lamentable refugee crisis that still affects Sicilian shores today, the island has a long history of mixed populations and cultures, and has been a centre of power as well as a witness to dark intervals. It was from this deep fascination with an island that feeds the imagination, rather like the dominant force of Mount Etna that feeds its fertile land, that the exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest* emerged and was on display at the British Museum in spring and summer of 2016 to great public, press and academic acclaim (**Figs 1–3**). It could not have been achieved without the generous support of the Assessorato dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana. Their staff included experts in the fields of ancient and medieval culture who were an enormous help in arranging the loan of some of the key icons of Greek, Roman and Norman Sicily housed in museums and other cultural institutions on the island. We would also like to thank the exhibition's sponsor Julius Baer as well as The McCorquodale Charitable Trust for their generous support of this publication.

While the book that accompanied the exhibition was written by the two co-curators, who are also the editors of this volume, it was always understood that our colleagues in Sicily would participate in a dialogue about their culture at an academic conference, to which many eminent museum directors, curators, archaeologists and historians contributed. This heady brew of scholars were joined by other specialists from various European, American and Canadian academic establishments. This volume presents the results of that conference with 18 papers that shed light on the vibrant and multifaceted environments of ancient and medieval Sicily. The conference took place during the run of the exhibition in London allowing its participants to visit it, absorb its narrative and examine the select artefacts that were, in many instances, the subjects of their papers. The exhibition also gave scholars the opportunity to reflect on the similarities and differences between the two main cultural periods under scrutiny.

Both the exhibition and the conference centred on two periods of enlightenment that stand out in Sicily's history: ancient Greek Sicily from the 8th century BC to the 3rd century BC (although the Roman period is not ignored) with a specific focus on the earliest Greek settlement on the island, and then Norman rule during the 11th and 12th centuries AD. These periods saw a flourishing of political, economic, cultural and artistic activities when the cities and kingdom of Sicily were admired from afar. For the duration of both, Sicily was governed by rulers and kings based on the island, rather than treated as a peripheral province and ruled by an external force. The conference focused principally on recent research, new excavations, and the economy and architecture of the island, as well as highlighting the importance of its UNESCO sites.

The first part of this volume focuses on ancient Sicily from the Iron Age to the late Roman period. The papers are



Figure 1 View of the 2016 British Museum exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*

presented in a chronological order and range from being purely archaeological to art historical and technical. They begin with a series of three that discuss the process of settlement and cultural development within the sphere of encounters between local and incoming peoples. Birgit Öhlinger and her co-authors discuss the settlement at Monte Iato in north-western Sicily in light of new research, and specifically how communities in the hinterland of the Phoenician and Greek settlements reacted to new cultural and economic stimuli. The authors' insights into the development of local ritual and cult practice, and how this affected the homestead and communal buildings, are based on ongoing excavations at the site. What is intriguing is how the local community at Monte Iato seems to have purposefully reinvented traditional religious practices to assert its identity in the face of new, dominating and perhaps threatening influences from the Greek and Phoenician settlers on the island. This concept of Greek versus local communities is developed further in the paper by Franco De Angelis. His discussion explores to what extent Greek Sicily was a world apart from contemporary Greece and the wider Mediterranean world. While acknowledging how scholars have variously interpreted the relationship between mother city and colony from the mid-19th century to the present day, De Angelis concludes that it was not one of centre and periphery but rather an organic relationship that saw Greek Sicily as an integral part of the Greek Mediterranean, with strong connections but also regional idiosyncrasies. He achieves this by – paraphrasing his own text – attempting to walk the fine line between distinguishing the usual and unusual features of Greek Sicily. The third in this trio of papers on the blurred boundaries between cultures in early Greek Sicily is by Francesca Spatafora, who discusses the

importance of encounters between indigenous or earlier peoples and Greek and Phoenician settlers. What emerges is how in some instances two distinct funerary or artistic practices might coincide in one settlement, a sign that two different cohabiting populations have influenced each other while also retaining their own traditions. The word 'encounter' features heavily and aptly describes how Sicily was settled by outsiders and the relationship between these incomers and the local people evolved. Then follows an innovative paper by Matthew Fitzjohn and Peta Bulmer that despite being based on ancient evidence, transcends the millennia in its method of analysis. It presents a fascinating glimpse into how the houses designed and built by early Greek settlers on Sicily are being used in an educational project that focuses on the creation of cross-curricular Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) teaching and a philosophy of learning through play to embed historical subject matter across curricula. This approach even adopts the building of LEGO™ models to encourage schoolchildren to engage with ancient cultures.

This hybridisation of cultural influences was the perfect environment for technological and artistic creativity. This is reflected in the two papers that follow, by the co-authors Gioconda Lamagna and Dario Palermo, and by Caterina Greco. They discuss the blending of different ethnic and stylistic characteristics that led to the production of innovative prestigious funerary items in gold, and architectural and free-standing sculpture to decorate major sanctuaries. Both papers contain exciting new perspectives on well-known artefacts and works of art that demonstrate how difficult it is to answer the question 'who produced what in such a multicultural society as ancient Sicily?' Lamagna and Palermo's paper was inspired by another exchange of



Figure 2 View of the 2016 British Museum exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*

material culture, when the gold bowl from Sant'Angelo Muxaro in the British Museum went on a tour of Sicily, which saw it visiting Syracuse, Agrigento and its home town after the exhibition in London. This provided an opportunity for all the surviving gold vessels and jewellery found in the rich tombs at Sant'Angelo Muxaro to be investigated for the first time under one roof. Using both state-of-the-art scientific techniques and the underestimated power of close scrutiny with the naked eye, the analysis produced crucial evidence for the source of the gold and assisted in grouping items together that were discovered under different circumstances and during different periods. The paper also highlights the great significance of archival material in the detective work that scholars and archaeologists need to undertake when examining old finds alongside new ones. Greco's paper continues this theme, outlining the research of earlier scholars while presenting her own interpretations of well-known sculptures. For example, she presents a new identification of the famous 'Motya Youth', found in a Phoenician context on the island of Motya, and shows how it relates to material from Selinous, the city that has yielded the largest amount of architectural sculpture in Greek Sicily.

More object studies follow, beginning with two papers that highlight the important marble sculptures found in the vicinity of the temples of Herakles and Zeus in ancient Akragas, modern Agrigento. The famous marble warrior has been the subject of many publications, but the exhibition in London offered a new opportunity to examine earlier conservation work and scholarship regarding the original pose and posture of the three sections that were assembled to form the warrior and other related marble fragments. Donatella Mangione, Lorella Pellegrino and Tommaso

Guagliardo present the outcome of this groundbreaking research and conservation programme, which serves as a useful reminder that isolated marble sculptures that grace many museums were often parts of groups, interacting with and forming a visual narrative with other figures. This is further demonstrated in the paper by Peter John Higgs, who presents a link between this group of marble sculptures from ancient Akragas and Grand Tour-style collections in Great Britain. In the Duke of Devonshire's collection held at Chatsworth House is a marble leg that was found in the same area as the fragments of the Agrigento warrior and other pieces, and certainly belongs to another figure in that group. These marble sculptures in Sicily and Chatsworth have never previously been published together in the same volume.

Continuing the study of objects into the later Greek Hellenistic period is a paper by Maria Lucia Ferruzza, who has worked extensively on terracotta sculpture from Sicily and southern Italy. She discusses a monumental terracotta head of Hades, a victim of the illicit excavations that blight the archaeological sites not only of Sicily but also most other regions of the Mediterranean. The narrative highlights the importance of protecting our heritage and how new excavations at ancient sites can yield crucial evidence for the contexts for objects sold on the art market that have been lost or deliberately deprived of their original provenance. Ferruzza demonstrates how sculpture in clay can equal in quality and scale that made in more expensive materials such as marble, and how, while it closely follows the styles of stone sculpture production, greater parallels can be found in the sphere of painted pottery and panel painting.

The final two papers in Part 1 of the volume move forward in time from the Greek to the Roman period, shedding new light on the epigraphic evidence found in



Figure 3 View of the 2016 British Museum exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*

Sicily and on how the economy was transformed after the island became the first Roman province in 227 BC. Jonathan Prag raises the issue of the poor publication of inscriptions from ancient Sicily; to address this he has been a key player in developing an online project called I.Sicily (<http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk>). This will bring together the complete corpus of inscriptions from the island and his paper here examines some of the problems encountered when studying the many different languages recorded on the island. The find-spots and distribution of epigraphic evidence are mapped out in various charts, maps and diagrams, which in turn reflect the different peoples – whether Sikel, Elymian, Phoenician, Punic, Oscan, Greek or Roman – that formed the diverse cultures on the island.

The final paper introduces exciting new archaeological discoveries at the site of Gerace near Enna in the centre of the island. The investigations reveal how it was not only the famous villa at Piazza Armerina that reflected the vast wealth being generated by the affluent Roman landowners in late antiquity. Each new season of excavations brings more revelations and so Roger Wilson, who directs the dig at Gerace, presents the most up-to-date information about the owner and function of the villa with its superb series of mosaic floors. He explores the established notion that the fertile land of Sicily was exploited heavily during the Roman period, and describes how at Gerace we even know the name of the owner, one Philippianus, whose moniker was stamped on many of the roof tiles from the buildings. Horses feature frequently on the decorative emblem on the stamps and, of greater significance, many horse bones have been discovered at the site: could Philippianus have bred horses for racing? This, the closing paper in the ancient section of the book, demonstrates the richness of the land of Sicily, which was the main draw for settlers and conquerors throughout its long history.

Like the second day of the conference, the second part of this volume deals with the Muslim and Norman periods in Sicily, and especially with themes prominent in current research: identity, cross-culturality and legacy. After the Normans conquered the island between roughly AD 1061 and AD 1091, they became rulers of an island that had been under Muslim rule for two and a half centuries. Although the degree to which it had taken on Arab, Berber or other Muslim settlers, and to which the previous Greek-speaking population had taken on new foreign customs, converted or intermarried, varied significantly, not just between the west and the east sides of the island, but even between villages and cities located close together. Some areas resisted Muslim rule to the degree that they had to be reconquered. At the same time, after only a few generations, Sicilian Muslims became dissatisfied with their absent rulers, first the Aghlabids from Ifriqiya, then the Fatimids from Egypt, and some sources speak of Muslim sympathy towards the Normans, even collaborating with and fighting in their armies. The period during and after the Norman Conquest has therefore, in the last couple of decades, received a surge in research, to leave behind old ideas of the conquest as a ‘mini crusade’ or of seeing the different peoples as opposing poles.

It is this situation that the first two papers of this part of the book address, from historical and archaeological viewpoints respectively. Central in Alex Metcalfe’s paper on the Muslim period is the question of identity, or rather ‘mixed identities’. What did it mean to be ‘Sicilian’, ‘local’, ‘indigenous’? How can we describe the peoples on the island and the differences between them, when there was no socio-religious homogeneity, even within small communities? Metcalfe asserts that inhabitants were ‘more usually differentiated by language and belief’, than by ethnicity,

shared material culture or origins. This brings to mind the stories related by Ibn Hawqal from Baghdad, of how in mixed marriages sons were raised as Muslim and daughters as Christian, or the indications of Christians ‘who were Arabised in manners and dress, and/or Arabicised in speech, but who had not converted to Islam’, as told by another traveller, Ibn Jubayr, in 1184–5. Such a society in constant religious, linguistic, cultural and ethnic flux was the one encountered by the first generations of Normans during and after the conquest.

While Metcalfe attempts to describe these peoples and situations using the historical record, the second paper takes an archaeological approach. It presents the first results of *sictransit*, a large interdisciplinary project led by Martin Carver, Girolamo Fiorentino and Alessandra Molinari, which aims to evaluate the impact of regime changes on the lives of ordinary Sicilians – farmers, artisans, merchants – between the 6th and 13th centuries AD. By combining information gained from field surveys and excavations, both old and ongoing, and including scientific analyses from animal bones, plant remains and human remains (carbon, nitrogen, strontium and oxygen isotopes, in addition to ancient DNA), as well as the contents of pottery vessels (organic residue analysis), the team aims to compile a picture of the changing communities, over time and between cultures/peoples. The first results presented here show how promising such an overarching perspective can be, even with the potential ‘risk’ of diminishing the effect of the so-called Arab Agricultural Revolution, that is, by showing how many of those crops and techniques had already been developed by late Byzantine times.

The question of identity appears once again in John Aspinwall and Alex Metcalfe’s new study of the text of the *Historia Sicula*, which until the early 20th century was a well-known and often-used text giving an almost-contemporary perspective on the Norman Conquest itself, having been written in the mid-12th century, but which more recently has fallen from academic favour. In this paper, Aspinwall and Metcalfe look specifically at what the *Historia Sicula* can tell us about ‘Normanness’ as well as the loss of that Norman identity over just a few generations after the Sicilian conquest. This was not necessarily through the events that the text describes, but rather during the time that it was written, in the later years of Roger II’s rule. Paradoxically, the text uses the term *normanni* to a degree unprecedented in any other text, contemporary or later, as by the time of Roger II it had already disappeared as a marker of identity. The authors therefore cautiously conjecture that the *Historia Sicula* was written for a specific southern Italian audience, rather than Sicilian, although ‘the possibilities that may or may not have informed its composition are many’.

The last of this first related group of papers jumps forward in time by about a century, to the final decade of Frederick II’s rule. It discusses a manuscript kept in the archives of the cathedral at Agrigento, a Latin–Arabic charter regarding a boundary enquiry dating to 1242, which is the only charter to use Arabic since the reigns of William II (AD 1164–89) and Constance (AD 1197–8), more than 40 years earlier. What prompted the sudden reuse of Arabic in this one surviving manuscript, and how can we

explain the fact that its style is identical to that of the *dūwān* documents written at the Norman court two generations earlier? Nadia Jamil and Jeremy Johns, together with giving a transcription and translation of the document, focus on the career of Obbertus Fallamonacha, the head of the financial administration of Sicily, and suggest this was, like under Constance 40 years previously, another attempt at reviving Arabic as an official language for the island’s administration. While this does not directly relate to questions of identity, it shows how at that time the polyethnic composition of the island was still in flux.

Jumping forward many centuries, the last three papers in the volume deal with the legacy of the Norman period, and more specifically with the uses and appropriations of its memory during the late 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries in Sicily. Most of Sicily’s post-Norman history is one of decline and exploitation, of Angevin, Spanish and Bourbon oppression, during which the poor population was kept poor by rich immigrant and local elites, and the island was ruled not from within, but once again, as in the Roman and Byzantine periods, by an uncaring ruler far away. However, the golden age of the Normans was not forgotten, its memory lingering, occasionally rising up, but never as consistently and forcefully as in the 18th century.

In this regard, Pierfrancesco Palazzotto explores the emergence of the so-called Gothic revival architecture in the late 18th century in Palermo, much earlier than in the rest of Italy, as intrinsically linked to the political climate of the time. The event that triggered this renewed interest in Norman architecture and its revival was the renovation of the Cathedral of Palermo, much of which at the time was still Norman (although paradoxically most of the Norman interior was entirely stripped). In an ironic turn of events, the Bourbon kings ruling Sicily from Naples used the Norman legacy as the legitimisation for their rule, for it showed that the island had had kings in the past. However, the popular and aristocratic liberalist forces, advocating autonomy for Sicily from Bourbon rule in Naples (thoughts and movements that would lead to Giuseppe Garibaldi’s unification and the events so magisterially described in Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa’s *Il Gattopardo* of 1958), used the same Norman past as evidence that Sicily had indeed been distinct and separate from the Kingdom of Naples, and autonomous. At the same time, the direct royal involvement in the cathedral renovations sparked a string of imitations and adoptions of the new Gothic style, both in other public monuments and in the private residences of some of the elite. Palazzotto ascertains that Palermo became the model for the neo-medieval architectural style that then spread throughout Italy and Europe, briefly reliving the cultural centrality it had held under the Normans.

Part of the renovation of Palermo Cathedral included the opening of the royal tombs in 1781 (those of Roger II, Constance, Henry VI and Frederick II), which also revived a wider interest in the Norman past, but one that was now historical and not just architectural. The circumstances of this event, which was attended by many eminent scholars and aristocrats and was published and illustrated repeatedly over the next few years, are described by Valeria Sola. These openings are placed in the larger context of the genesis and

history of the tombs, and connects it to the changing significance of the tombs throughout the centuries, visible through several changes in the layout of their display within the cathedral from the time of Roger II until the 19th century, as well as through an earlier opening of the tombs in the 15th century. Unfortunately, she concludes that the 18th-century layout given to the tombs, which was devised as part of the sumptuous renovation of the cathedral, meant to glorify both the Bourbon rule and the Norman past, falls short of what was originally intended and does not do the important tombs justice.

Lastly, Maurizia Onori focuses attention on a specific group of monuments that clearly imitates medieval Norman architecture, similar to that of the private residences discussed by Palazzotto, but built later, and with quite a different function, namely as funerary chapels. Interestingly, while Palazzotto links the revival of Gothic architecture to the renovation of the Cathedral of Palermo, Onori pinpoints the origins for the micro-revival of the early 20th century, and specifically for these funerary monuments, to the IV National Italian Exhibition of Arts and Industries, held in Palermo in 1891–2. For Palazzotto, the exhibition could be seen as an endpoint, at which architects boasted of their restoration work to the famous Norman monuments. But for Onori it was the starting point, where architects derived inspiration for new buildings, such as these funerary chapels. Furthermore, in her case study of one of those chapels, the Masi chapel in Palermo, it seems that the specific architectural style was deliberately chosen not by the architect, but by the chapel's patron, for its strong symbolic meaning, to identify the owners of the chapel with the Normans as restorers of Christianity to the island. It thus appears that, in this last paper, legacy and identity, the two themes of Part 2 of the volume, walk hand in hand.

The papers in the first section concerning ancient Sicily have highlighted how significant the relationship was between the indigenous or pre-existing communities with Greek and Phoenician settlers. The traditional and profoundly flawed notion that Greeks dominated cultural activities almost as soon as they arrived on Sicily's shores has hopefully now been challenged by a more culturally aware and less Hellenocentric approach to archaeological data and interpretation. One of the primary reasons why ancient Sicily is of such significance is this fusion between different peoples and cultures. This has been established through some of the more object-based papers particularly that concerning the precious gold items from Sant'Angelo Muxaro. Previously there was a bias that high value items of precious materials must have been the work of Greek or Phoenician craftsmen, possibly even made overseas and imported, but now there is a more general awareness that the reality is more complex. Scientific analysis of the alloys and other materials used in the manufacture of the gold rings has helped to understand the methods of production but not always place of manufacture, but with an acceptance that this is still a work in progress. The authors of these object-based papers are all wisely cautious in not forcing

their opinions as to the origin of such important gold vessels and jewellery, or the production place of marble statues. The ever-increasing study of ancient polychromy has also been of great significance in these papers, particularly in those concerning the warrior from ancient Akragas and the head of Hades from Morgantina, the latter demonstrating how important the provenance of a particular object is, in that instance transforming it from a product of art into an artefact with a context. Many of the objects discussed in these papers come from sites still being excavated, or update us on the progress of archaeological work on sites still under investigation and so new information could emerge with the flick of a trowel, something that could change the recommendations presented in these papers, which are simply recommendations rather than firm conclusions.

The second part of the volume, on medieval Sicily, is equally concerned with nuancing traditional assumptions and interpretations, and mapping the levels of fusion (or not) between the different peoples. As more documents are discovered, studied for the first time, or even restudied, our idea of the 'Normans of Sicily' constantly changes. Their interactions with and treatment of the earlier indigenous Greek-speaking population and those conquerors that had come before them – mostly Muslim Berbers and Arabs – indicate an awareness of cultural value, and a desire to find a balance between the new and old that was acceptable for all, out of which a new culture arose. Comprehensive archaeological excavations and studies of older excavated material bring to light how the transition of power from one people to another manifested itself in daily life. Additionally, the papers that deal with the modern period indicate how 'legacy studies', now commonly applied to the classical world, have equal value for the medieval period. By studying how the Norman legacy was appropriated, used and sometimes also abused during the 18th and 19th centuries, we can show how this short period of just over a hundred years still resonates today, both locally and internationally.

Sicily boasts several UNESCO world heritage sites, confirming the cultural significance of the island throughout history. Most of these relate to the two historical periods highlighted in this volume, and fuelled the research questions, theories and cultural activities that form the nuclei of the various papers. The ancient sites of Syracuse, the rocky necropolis of Pantalica and the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento were recognised for their outstanding range of architectural forms, influences and preservation. The Roman Villa del Casale near Piazza Armerina is hailed as the ultimate surviving example of a late Roman luxury villa with mosaics of exceptional artistic quality. The Norman Palace, the Palatine Chapel, La Zisa, the churches of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio and of San Cataldo, and the cathedrals in Palermo, Monreale and Cefalù were included in the UNESCO register as recently as 2015 as important reminders of the unique culture that the Normans created on the island.

# Part 1: Ancient Sicily

## Chapter 1

# Monte Iato: Negotiating Indigeneity in an Archaic Contact Zone in the Interior of Western Sicily

Birgit Öhlinger, Erich Kistler,  
Benjamin Wimmer, Ruth Irovec and  
Thomas Dauth  
Institute of Archaeologies, University  
of Innsbruck

Gerald Weissengruber and Gerhard  
Forstenpointner  
Institute of Topographic Anatomy,  
University of Veterinary Medicine  
of Vienna

### Sicily as contact zone

By the early Iron Age the Mediterranean Sea was already a key player in an entangled pre-global world connecting various geographical regions and cultures.<sup>1</sup> Within this mega-space of transcultural interactions and interconnections Sicily was one of the most important hubs due to its position at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea. With the newly founded Phoenician and Greek settlements along the coasts from the 8th century BC onwards, Sicily was becoming an integral part of this interconnected world. The hinterland of the island was also increasingly transformed into a zone of intercultural contacts and encounters with specific meeting places, where the ‘global’ interchanged with the ‘local’ and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> During the 7th and 6th centuries BC such places and forms of cross-cultural communication increased and affected more and more local traditions. While extended families or clans settled on hilltops in hamlet-like compounds had been the typical way of life since the Bronze Age, around the middle of the 6th century BC a change towards living in extra-familial neighbourhoods in conglomerates of rectangular houses comprising one or several rooms is seen. In conjunction with this transformation the deceased were no longer buried in the traditional multi-burial chamber tomb of their family or descent group, but were laid in individual single graves (*fossa* graves, a *cappuccina* or sarcophagus burials, *enchytrismo*).<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, such local appropriations of foreign practices triggered a continuing process of eroding old social structures by negotiating and creating new forms of sociality and power structures in the interior of Sicily.<sup>4</sup> As a consequence, the self-localisation of the local communities as autochthonous was dramatically challenged. Our argument is that one of the local responses to this new situation was to establish conscious references to an imagined pre-Greek or pre-colonial past and tradition. In an attempt to prove or disprove this argument, this paper will examine the role of ritual practice in the process of local self-positioning and the production of indigeneity in a cultural contact zone taking the archaic settlement on Monte Iato in the interior of western Sicily as a starting point.

### Religion, ritual and self-localisation in cultural contact situations

From a religious perspective ritual activity serves to make faith or belief physically tangible. Cultic communication with the gods as well as with the cult participants is structured by symbolic, repetitive and stereotyped behaviour. On a sociological basis, rituals as an integral part of religious behaviour are collective representations constructing personal, social and cultural identities and affiliations.<sup>5</sup> Following Arjun Appadurai, they are not simply mechanical techniques for social aggregation, but complex social techniques that are active, intentional and productive.<sup>6</sup> He states that: ‘One of the most remarkable general features of the ritual process is its highly specific way of localizing duration and extension, of giving these categories names and properties, values and meanings, symptoms and legibility.’<sup>7</sup> This process appears to be particularly significant when a specific group’s identity became destabilised by growing influence and pressure from outside: the performing of specific rituals served to

create a feeling of local belonging. Remembrance politics and cultural commemoration therefore play a major role in forming a local identity and authenticity. Although indigeneity is in some ways always constructed in relation to the past, there is no obligatory need for traditions that truly reach far back in time. Since narratives of history are flexible and transformable tools, invented traditions and related rituals can fulfil the same function: they anchor people in space and time.

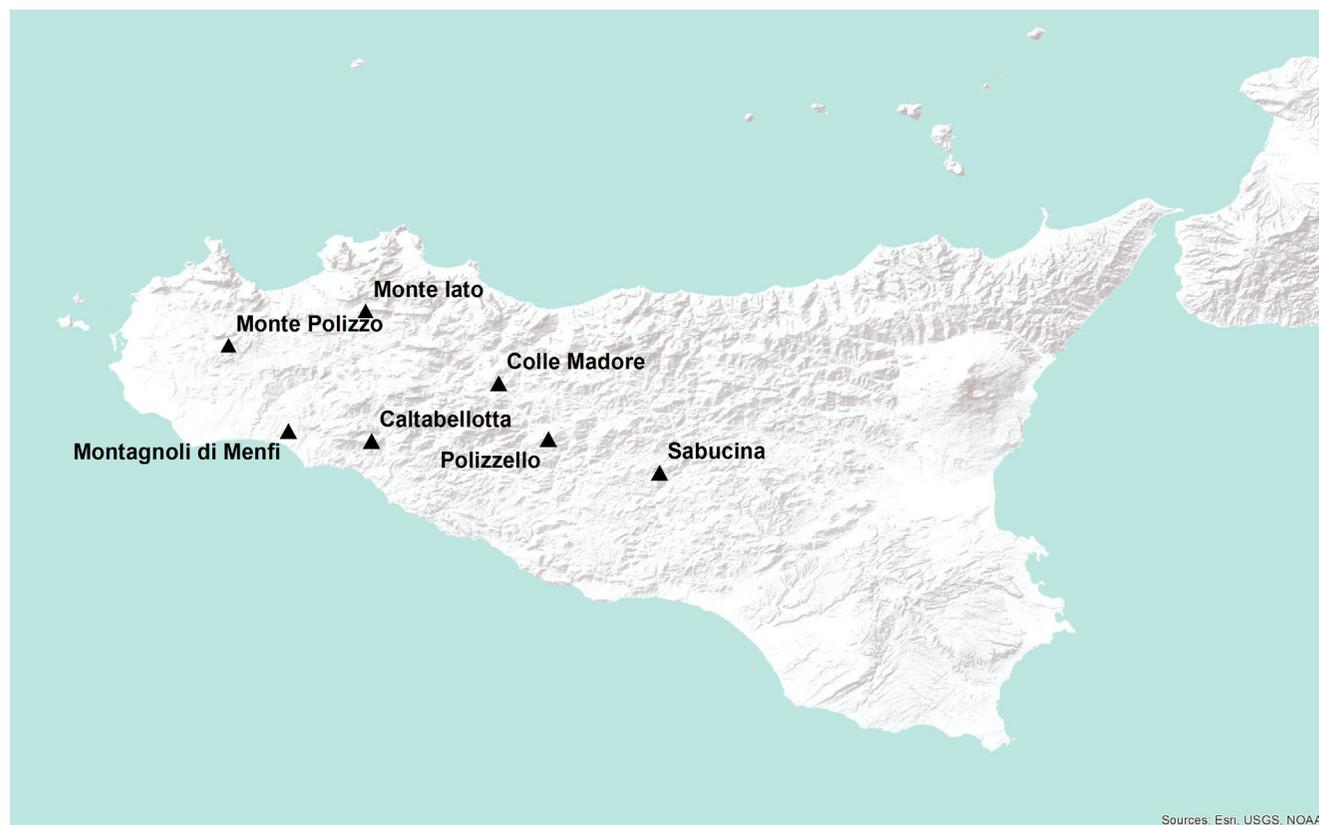
As social techniques, rituals of communal remembrance interconnect people through the past by constructing a shared history. To make this localisation of duration and extension visible and tangible within the rituals, specific items are often used: so-called Archaika.<sup>8</sup> Such objects can be real antiques that are already hundreds of years old at the time of their use, for example heirlooms, or they can be objects that were purposely made to look old in order to refer back to former times. Within communal social and religious rituals they were used to embody a real or invented heritage from the world of the ancestors and to give those rituals a seemingly historic authenticity. In this process of creating a specific version of history, rituals and the use of Archaika can also function as tools of empowerment to legitimise demands for supremacy by projecting these claims back to the distant past. At any rate, from the point of view of the participants such religious rituals are experienced as real and authentic and as being rooted in presumed old traditions, and are therefore particularly powerful as a fundamental resource for producing a feeling of indigeneity. This is especially true for intercultural settings and contact zones, such as those established within the interior of western Sicily during the 6th and 5th centuries BC.

### Self-localisation on Monte Iato

From the Bronze Age to the advanced Iron Age loci of self-localisation and ritual practice were mostly large round buildings with central hearth places within the hamlet-like compounds of the settlement, such as the ones discovered at Montagnoli di Menfi, Monte Polizzello, Sabucina, Caltabellotta or Colle Madore (**Fig. 1**).<sup>9</sup> As each compound was inhabited by an extended family, the central round building was used as a family-internal cult area for social gatherings in honour of the ancestors and forebears.<sup>10</sup> From around the middle of the 6th century BC onwards, when the local communities had turned to settle and live in rectangular houses within clearly structured settlements, the former ritually used round buildings could serve equally on an extra-familial basis as a place of commemoration of an imagined past and therefore as loci of indigeneity. However, in some cases such loci of self-localisation are not only evidenced in the context of the cult and feasting buildings in the middle of compounds, but also as open feasting areas, like the ritual places in front of the chamber tombs in sectors A and B at Monte Polizzello.

Such an open-air site of self-positioning, but within the settlement area, is also seen at Monte Iato. The archaic settlement is located in the upper Belice Valley around 30km south-west of modern Palermo and occupies the slightly sloping plateau on the summit and the flanks of the hill (see **Fig. 1**). The 6th-century BC settlement followed the local habitation pattern for compounds that were loosely spread over the whole area, namely the Eastern Quarter,<sup>11</sup> as well as the area of the later agora<sup>12</sup> and the Western Quarter (**Fig. 2**).<sup>13</sup> Within the latter the space surrounding the so-called Aphrodite temple functioned as an extra-familial cult place

Figure 1 Map with settlements mentioned in the text (© University of Innsbruck)



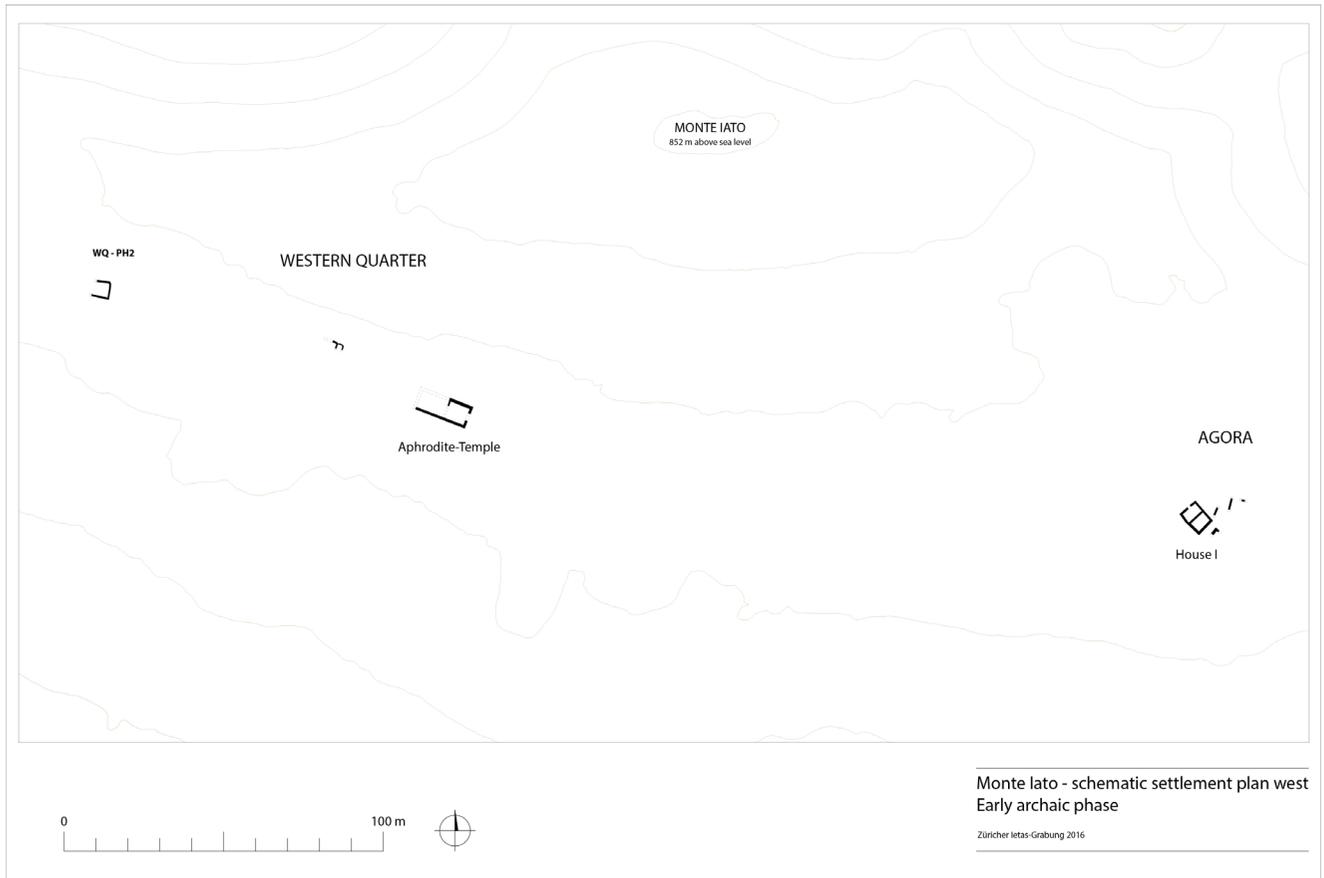


Figure 2 Monte Iato: schematic settlement plan of the Western Quarter of the early archaic phase (© Zürcher Iaitas Grabung)

and developed into a central cult district in the course of the 6th/beginning of the 5th century BC (Fig. 3).<sup>14</sup>

### Spaces of self-localisation in the first half of the 6th century BC

The first testified ritual activities within this area were those of sacrificial meals. The communal meal was one of the oldest and most frequently celebrated rituals within the local communities of Bronze and Iron Age Sicily, archaeologically attested through hearth places and ritual deposits containing animal bones, ash and ceramics for the preparation and consumption of food and drink.<sup>15</sup> At Monte Polizzello, for example, traces of such ritual meals on the hilltop plateau reach back to the second half of the 9th century BC and remained more or less unchanged well into the early 5th century BC.<sup>16</sup> Because of its long-standing ritual praxis the sacrificial meal was also one of the central events that framed the retrospective creation of memory and past. On Monte Iato several archaeological layers consisting of small stones and beaten earth (stone packings), as well as local ceramics, ash remains and huge amounts of animal bone fragments bearing chop and butchering marks, testify to such meals for the first half of the 6th century BC near and beneath the later built Aphrodite temple (Fig. 4).<sup>17</sup> The stone packings were erected on the various ground elevations of the pre-temple area. The ones found 5m north-west of the temple lay on top of each other and were separated by thin alluvial layers. The three superimposed stone packings show that they were renewed intermittently and are indicative of the formation of these stone packings in the context of periodically celebrated sacrificial feasts, as the

findings show. Maybe the packings were meant to compress the clayey ground, so that feast participants from afar would be able to erect temporary dwellings. In line with this interpretation the findings pressed into packings can be addressed as waste from sacrificial meals. Just to the south, similar stone packings with ceramic and bone fragments were excavated and were formerly interpreted as remains of floors of a proto-historic dwelling (Fig. 5).<sup>18</sup> As no indications of associated architectural structures have been found to date, ephemeral buildings seem more likely.

Although the three stone packings have so far been excavated only in a small trench of 1.5 x 1.5m, the ceramics and animal bones give clear indications of local ritual praxis as social technique. This becomes evident from a closer look at the sacrificed animals.<sup>19</sup> From a total of 434 excavated animal bones, 170 skeletal elements of cattle, red deer, pigs and sheep were reconstructed. Remarkably, all of the ruminant animals appeared to be female, while some male wild boars were found under the otherwise female

Figure 3 Monte Iato: central cult district of the late archaic phase (© Zürcher Iaitas Grabung)

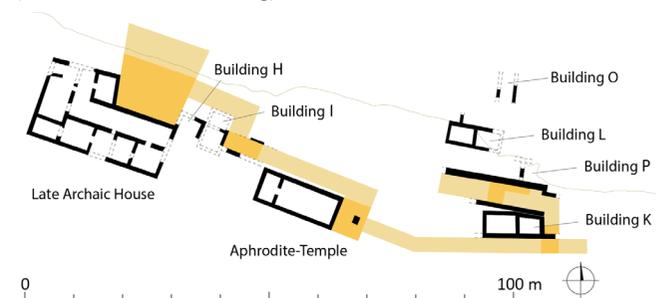




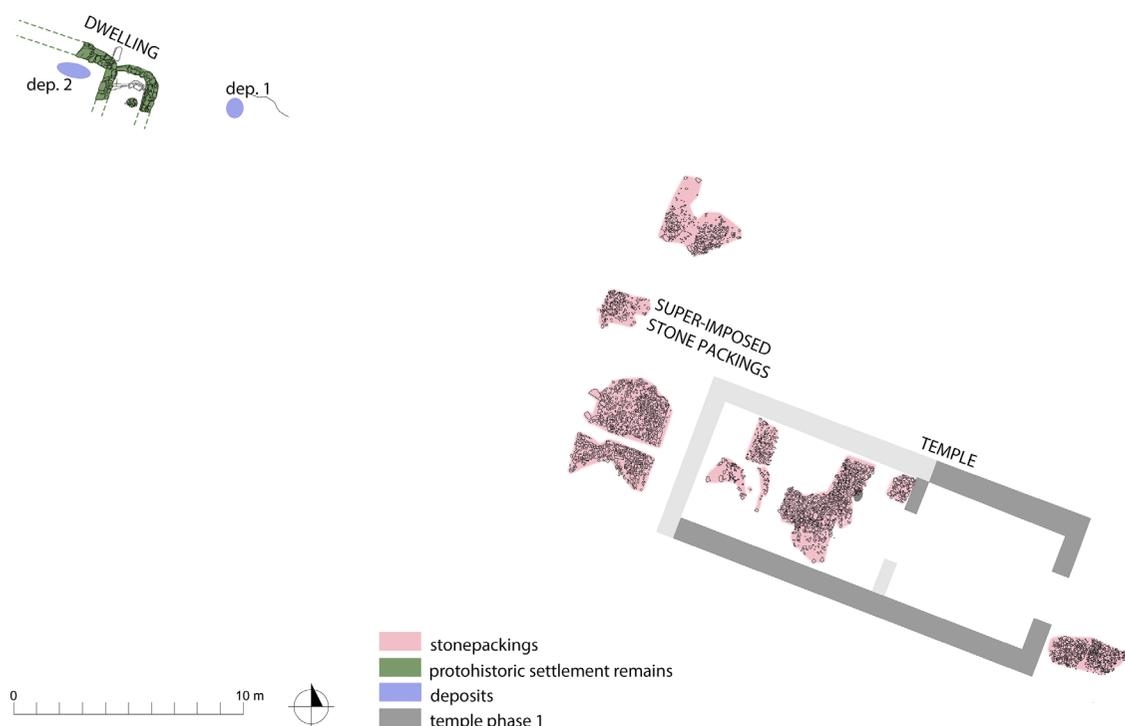
Figure 4 Stone packings at Monte Iato (© University of Innsbruck)

pigs, which may point to a conspicuous consumption. Most of them had already reached adult stage of life before they were slaughtered.<sup>20</sup> The percentage of meat-bearing body parts as compared to fragments of skulls and torso skeletons was clearly larger, which shows that only the best cuts of meat were consumed on site, while the overall lack of fragments of skulls and torso skeletons shows that the animals were slaughtered and butchered in a different place. The slaughter and butchering are evidenced by chop marks on a total of 15 identifiable skeleton components. Half of the marks hint at the usage of a very blunt tool which might indicate antiquated tools such as an Archaikum for ritual slaughter and butchering (Fig. 6). Thus, the slaughter and butchering as central acts of the ritual sacrifice using an old or old-fashioned tool would already have an aura of local rootedness.<sup>21</sup> The spectrum of the consumed animals might also point in the direction of an imagined world of the ancestors and forebears. The most predominant

sacrificial animal was cattle, as is typical for other cult sites in Sicily, followed by remarkably high ratios of red deer bones, comprising more than 25 per cent of determined faunal remains, while domestic pigs and sheep made up only a considerably smaller percentage of remains. A correspondingly high ratio of red deer bones cannot be found in archaic house contexts, such as for example in the area of the Hellenistic agora, where red deer makes up under 10 per cent of determined faunal remains (see below).<sup>22</sup> This shows the special importance of deer consumption within ritual contexts. As the comparison below with the western Sicilian settlement of Monte Polizzo demonstrates, red deer were most likely associated with an ancestral way of life of hunter-gatherers and were used in cultic contexts to create a link to a traditional world.

The meat was presumably prepared in the vicinity of the stone packings. Accordingly, the spectrum of ceramic shapes shows a clear prevalence of monochrome coarse ware used for transportation and cooking (70 per cent) as well as tableware for the consumption of food and drink. All the ceramics from the packings were local productions, comprising plumed ware, incised and matt painted, as well as monochrome ware. Important to note is that the drinking vessels comprised mainly local incised ware, although other contexts document that Greek imports had already reached the settlement in large quantities, as is seen, for example, in the backfills of settlement layers of the first half of the 6th century BC on the southern side of the Hellenistic agora.<sup>23</sup> The incised pottery belongs to the local ceramic production that was generally replaced by the matt-painted ware during the first half of the 6th century BC. In the context of cultic activities such incised ceramics were used far beyond this period, which indicates their specific role in symbolising local traditions. They helped to

Figure 5 Monte Iato: plan of the archaic remains of the first half of the 6th century BC (© University of Innsbruck)



embed the rituals in an aura and feeling of local authenticity that was strengthened by purposefully avoiding the use of imports.<sup>24</sup>

The archaeological record of the stone packings shows for the first time the manifestation and installation of a cult place with the specific function of creating indigeneity at a time when domestic daily life in terms of the architecture of houses and the consumption of alcohol had already been influenced by foreign practices. The archaic houses I and II in the area of the Hellenistic agora demonstrate that the use of Greek tableware together with Greek drinking habits had already reached elite households. These different consumption patterns reflect only a seeming discrepancy, as the Greek influence at the social level of the elites was abrogated through the communal rituals conducted at spaces of indigeneity.

A similar pattern of archaeological and bio-archaeological findings is documented from the above-mentioned settlement of Monte Polizzo, where the remains of sacrificial feasts from the 6th century BC, such as animal bones and fragmented tableware as well as cooking pots, were found on the summit of the hill scattered around an altar.<sup>25</sup> Although some fragments of Greek drinking vessels have been found, it was an almost fully preserved ‘incisa’ bowl that was of central ritual importance and functioned as an Archaikum.<sup>26</sup> It was in use for several decades before it was buried on the summit, indicating the conservation of old-fashioned habits on the social field around the altar.<sup>27</sup> According to Christian Mühlenbock, the huge amount of red deer remains, in particular antlers, can be interpreted as a conscious reference to an imagined traditional or ancestral way of life of hunter-gatherers.<sup>28</sup> This was definitely a practice that looked back to an ‘imagined ancestry’ because at that time the subsistence ecology at Monte Polizzo was already agriculture and animal husbandry, as is indicated by the stable rectangular houses with tiled roofs near the cult place at the summit. Mühlenbock stated that the bones and antlers of red deer commemorated the centuries-old worship of deer, which had become a symbol for local authenticity at least in the course of the 6th century BC.<sup>29</sup> Excavator Ian Morris believed the deer antlers that were found scattered all over the summit were used as headdresses in commemorative ceremonies as some of them show clear groove carvings made by knives for the purpose of attaching the antlers to something.<sup>30</sup> He refers to the well-known jug found in the 1920s in a tomb at Polizzello, showing depictions of two men. Contrary to the interpretation that they are warriors wearing wide-brimmed hats, Morris interprets them as dancing men wearing deer antlers as headdresses.<sup>31</sup> However, the antlers and the use of local incised ware were not the only references to local history on the summit. A round platform was installed as a kind of altar around the middle of the 6th century BC and it clearly refers to round cult and feasting buildings of the late Bronze and early Iron Age. As the settlement was already comprised of agglutinating rectangular houses at that time, the round platform functioned to revitalise the traditional place of social reproduction and to connect the present with the past of the presumed way of life of ancestors and forebears.<sup>32</sup>

Similar processes of monumental installations and sacralisations of a presumable past can also be observed at



Figure 6 Bone fragment with chop mark (© G. Weißengruber, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna)

Monte Polizzello. Within this native settlement in central Sicily, a whole compound was transformed into a place of cultic remembrance during the first half of the 6th century BC. The round buildings A–E of the compound were sealed with earth and covered with stones. In this way the former residential buildings were converted into round low platforms and hence frozen in time. The biggest building E – which formerly was used for social gatherings and cultic rituals within the familial clan – was equipped with a baldachin-like structure after sealing and used as an altar for the burning of offerings. Shallow pits were dug into the surface of the platform, in which votive offerings and remains of ritual meals were deposited. Among the remains of diverse sacrificed animals at least one deer antler is published.<sup>33</sup> Although red deer antlers are also attested in ritual contexts of the first half of the 6th century BC on Monte Iato, they are less frequent than on Monte Polizzo and their special function within the rituals remains elusive. One stems from a proto-historic dwelling comprising a main room and a rounded annex with a fireplace that had cultic significance. This is witnessed among other means from two ritual deposits (deposits 1 and 2, see **Fig. 5**).<sup>34</sup> From the floor level of the main room beneath, several animal bones and part of a deer antler was also recovered.<sup>35</sup> At the corresponding outdoor level of the house another fragmented antler came to light beneath a large number of animal bones, as well as a cattle horn including parts of the cranium. Together with a ritual deposit about 3.5m to the east of the building (deposit 1) they may belong to ritual events, where the horn and the antler had a symbolic meaning. Although the antlers have no tool marks that would give a hint as to their use within the ritual act, they might be of special importance as a symbol of the life of ancestors and forebears.<sup>36</sup> The pit contained at least 21 vessels, a minimum of six of which were biconical incised bowls with single handles, as well as animal bones and

charcoal (**Fig. 7**).<sup>37</sup> It is remarkable that no imports were buried. The exclusion of imports seems to be a conscious decision in order to make a reference to a seemingly traditional world. The material composition of ceramics, bones and charcoal of the deposit and the manner of dealing with it corresponds to other known examples of indigenous ritual practice. The vessels were intentionally broken during a ritual before being laid down in the pit. Such ritual behaviour is also attested in other indigenous contexts, like Montagnoli di Menfi, Monte Polizzello and Colle Madore (see **Fig. 1**).<sup>38</sup>

### Spaces of self-localisation in the second half of the 6th/beginning of the 5th century BC

More retrospective than the consumption of red deer as a presupposed reification of old customs is the production and consumption of clay hut models that refer to the real cultic and festive buildings within the Bronze and Iron Age compounds. A special clay model comes from Monte Iato, depicting a ritual round-house with a bull on top of the roof (**Fig. 8**).<sup>39</sup> This symbolised the sacrificial slaughtering and the subsequent ritual meal and communal feasting.<sup>40</sup> By combining these two key elements of local sacrificial practices and depositing the model in a building that follows the new settlement structure of rectangular houses, it served to (re) produce an imagined ancestral past. As it was found in the debris of a house dating to the beginning of the 5th century BC, its function was clearly to form a retrospective link between dwelling in agglutinating homes and the traditional living in compounds within extended families. The intention to link the new architecture with the ancestral past through miniaturised cultic and festive houses is witnessed not only at Monte Iato. Such models are also known from Monte Polizzello, Casteltermini, Monte Maranfusa and Colle

Madore.<sup>41</sup> The majority of the published clay hut models stem from rectangular buildings and not as one might assume from round buildings. Most of them were deposited in cultic buildings with references to Greek architectural styles – so-called oikos buildings – that emerged around the middle of the 6th century BC in connection with the new settlement structures. Although they had tiled roofs and were sometimes equipped with Greek antefixes, the clay hut models show that they can be interpreted as the functional successors of the round cultic and festive houses. The difference was that they were now accessible by the whole settlement community and not only by the various extended families. In this respect the hut models serve as Archaika. Whether they are real or invented Archaika, meaning reused or contemporary made, is hard to tell, because they are dated only by the archaeological context. Russenberger dates the first models at the earliest to the first half of the 6th century BC, while the vast majority were found in late archaic contexts.<sup>42</sup> This shows that the models acquired a specific retrospective symbolic dimension around the middle of the 6th century BC, when they were deposited in ritual contexts as an objectification of local history. Their ritual circulation and consumption shows the local desire and need to connect the new architecture with traditional ritual practice.

This becomes clear with regard to Monte Iato, where such an oikos building was constructed in the last quarter of the 6th century BC, namely the first phase of the Aphrodite temple (**Figs 9–10**). Even though the building shows clear references to Greek building techniques and had a tiled roof, it was not a temple as a solely representative building for the gods in a Greek sense.<sup>43</sup> Although its first phase was partly destroyed, a long rectangular ground plan of at least 17.70 x 7.20m can be reconstructed. A 30cm-high threshold partitioned the interior into a large lower back room and a slightly smaller anteroom. Whether a real division constructed of organic material existed between the two rooms is unclear as so far no postholes or other indications of walls have been found. In the back room near the northern wall an area with a conspicuous abundance of charcoal remains was excavated, which may point to a former fireplace (**Fig. 11**). In line with this are the findings of the occupational layer of the temple's first building phase, where the discovery of cookware fragments, tableware of local production and animal bones point to the celebration of ritual meals within this edifice. Accordingly, the function of the first phase of the temple would have been the same as that of the cultic and festive round building within compounds. Similar observations can be made in Sabucina, where the small oikos temple (B) in Greek style was built directly over a former festive round-house (B), and part of the outer wall of the latter was integrated into the new building as a bench.<sup>44</sup> In Sabucina as well as at Monte Iato the temple and the surrounding area was still a place of local self-localisation on a regional level, although the architectural appearance had changed. Local, regional and possibly even interregional groups would have met during sacrificial feasts in the Aphrodite temple and the open area in front of it to communicate and trade with one another, but maybe also to negotiate landholdings, way leaves, and water laws for transhumance or animal husbandry.

**Figure 7** Deposit 1 and biconical bowls (*atingitoi*) (© University of Innsbruck)



It was only in the course of the late 6th century BC that this function changed. By around 500 BC at the latest, the place was transformed into a monumental manifesto espousing the centralisation of power by the local installation of Greek architecture as demonstrated by the late archaic house with its klinai rooms on the upper storey and the oikos-like Aphrodite temple in its second phase with an adyton and an altar at the front.<sup>45</sup> With the altar the ritual sacrifice was transferred to the public place of the cultic open-air area and the ritual dining was instead relocated to the newly built late archaic house that was connected to the forecourt with its altar over a processional way.<sup>46</sup> However, it is clear that this new structure with its klinai rooms was not a public building that was accessible to everyone. It was reserved for the new local elite, a group that had been established in the context of the intensification of colonial contacts. Furthermore, the oikos L and the two-room building K to the east of the Aphrodite temple, which probably functioned as club and feasting houses for guest friends from far away, indicate at least for the first half of the 5th century BC that the cult place had an interregional reach.<sup>47</sup> In this way a central place of self-localisation was dramatically altered at first glance. However, despite the Greek veneer the residents and users of the new buildings were still connected to the local, because the new elite had also to legitimise itself through the ritual performance referring to local traditions and the invention of narratives of a shared history.<sup>48</sup> This becomes clear partly from the fact that the perpendicular bisector to the corridor of the banquet house rests precisely on the ring of stones that formed the above-ground marker of an abandonment deposit in the main room of the above-mentioned native dwelling that was cut in half by the north wall of the late archaic house's corridor.<sup>49</sup> Remarkably, this deposit again contained part of an antler. On top of the ring of stones a horn core of a ram and an antler were laid down as above-ground markers.<sup>50</sup> This finding pattern resembles the one from the use period of the proto-historic dwelling; again, the antler and the horn were found together, which refers to sacrificial rituals, while the antler points to the life of forebears. The deposit and the overbuilding of the proto-historic dwelling show the intention and need of the builders of the late archaic house to link the new edifice to the ancestral ritual space, comparable to the ritual connection between round-house B and oikos B in Sabucina. The retrospective linkage to cultic architecture transformed the late archaic house, or at least the festive ground in front of the klinai rooms on the upper storey, to a place of self-localisation and remembrance similar to those at Monte Polizzello and Polizzo, although there the association is more obvious on an architectural level. Another reference to local customs might be observed in the case of a deposit that was installed around 500 BC at the festive ground in front of the north façade of the late archaic house.<sup>51</sup> Among old-fashioned fragmented sherds the deposit contained significant amounts of animal bones as skeletal remains of ritual feasting. They mainly represent meat-bearing body parts of cattle (40 per cent), ovicaprines (28 per cent), domestic pigs (18 per cent) and red deer (14 per cent).<sup>52</sup> Although bovine remains clearly predominate, as in



Figure 8 Clay hut model V 2618, Antiquarium Case D'Alia, San Cipirello (© Züricher Iaitas Grabung)

the context of the above-discussed stone packings, the percentage of deer is still rather high compared to the aforementioned domestic contexts in the area of the later agora. There, out of a total of 74 identifiable animal bones, red deer makes up just 8 per cent within the late archaic layers, with cattle bones (42 per cent) dominating, followed by ovicaprines (36.5 per cent) and domestic pigs (13.5 per cent). Although these observations of the significance of red deer are based on the first results of the faunal analysis, they indicate that the consumption of deer was more common in cultic than in domestic contexts, which might be a feature of the special meaning of deer for the self-localisation in contact zones of the 6th century BC. The finds of the above-mentioned stone packings from the first half of the 6th century BC as well as the ritual deposit from the end of that century show that not only the deer antlers, but also the deer itself as a sacrificial animal – as the sacrificed red deer from the stone packings were female – and its conspicuous

Figure 9 Aphrodite temple: reconstruction of the first phase (© University of Innsbruck)

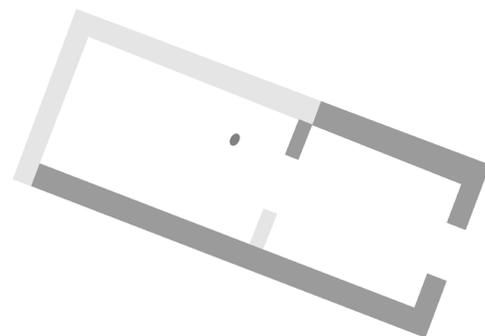




Figure 10 Overview of the Aphrodite temple in 2016 (© University of Innsbruck)

consumption within cultic feasting might have played a central role in forming and reforming local history. The finding of a large deer antler (V 1802) in the debris of the late archaic banquet house that was ritually abandoned around 460 BC might also point in this direction.<sup>53</sup> It was possibly laid down on the upper storey of the house as *pars pro toto* for sacrifice of the animal in the course of the abandonment ritual.

### Conclusion

The study of the development of the cultic area surrounding the Aphrodite temple at Monte Iato gave new insights into the complexity of cultural contact zones. It showed that the need for and emergence of loci of self-localisation were directly linked to the special contact situation of Sicily or in a

broader sense to the ‘Mediterranisation’<sup>54</sup> that was occurring all over the Mediterranean in the period of the later early Iron Age. Within these zones the local communities were challenged to strike a balance between new influences from outside and the continuation of a local feeling of belonging on various social levels and in different social situations. One way to cope with this situation was to establish special places of self-localisation through a retrospective construction of a pre-Greek or pre-colonial past within the social field of religion. Within this process of reconstruction, history was written and rewritten and constantly constructed in the nexus between meaning-making, authenticity and power-building. At Monte Iato this led to a seeming paradox. On the one hand, the density of Greek influences reached its highest level at the cult place surrounding the Aphrodite

Figure 11 Aphrodite temple: fireplace (© University of Innsbruck)



temple around 500 BC, while, on the other hand, the conscious connection to the proto-historic dwelling and the late archaic deposits tell a different tale. They reveal that at Monte Iato the appropriation of Greek material culture for local empowerment led to the intensified production of indigeneity as a feeling of belonging and rootedness.

### Acknowledgements

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### Notes

- 1 Kistler *et al.* 2015a.
- 2 Öhlinger 2015a and b, 30–38; see Ulf 2009.
- 3 Öhlinger 2015a, 47–54; Burkhardt 2013, 121–8.
- 4 See Ulf 2015, 874–8, 881–4.
- 5 Belliger and Krieger 2013, 29; see also Hödl 2003.
- 6 Appadurai 1996, 178–99; on the importance of religion as an establisher of identity in migration contexts, see Lauser and Weißköppel 2008.
- 7 Appadurai 1996, 180.
- 8 Kistler *et al.* 2017; see also Mehling 1998; Guggisberg 2004.
- 9 Öhlinger 2015a with further references; for Polizzello and Sabucina, see Öhlinger 2016a.
- 10 Kistler *et al.* 2015a, 521; Öhlinger 2015b.
- 11 Isler 2009, 152, 158.
- 12 Mohr 2012, 116–18; Isler 2009, 153–7.
- 13 Russenberger 2014, 101–5; Isler 2008, 138; Isler 2007, 112.
- 14 The temple was attributed to Aphrodite by a graffito on a sherd of a kantharos with the letters ΑΦΡ (K372), found in a deposit outside the temple dating to around 300 BC. For the archaic period there is no evidence that Aphrodite was worshipped inside the building. Isler *et al.* 1984, 86–99, 103–6.
- 15 Öhlinger 2015a and b; for sacrificial deposit versus votive deposit, see Öhlinger 2015a, 161–73, and for ritual dining Öhlinger 2015a, 174–8.
- 16 Palermo *et al.* 2009; Panvini *et al.* 2009a; the ritual itself – the slaughtering and consumption of the sacrificed animals – remained unchanged, but the used items changed. In the course of the 6th century BC, especially around the middle of the century, in some contexts more imports were used within the communal meal; see, for example, building B, deposit 5. Panvini *et al.* 2009a, 36–47.
- 17 Aside from a rim fragment of a colonial Greek pithos in the lowest stone packing, not a single sherd of a Greek import was found. Comparisons with amphora-like pithoi from the necropolis of Himera show that the lowest packing cannot be dated before 575 BC (inv. I-K 4802), Vassallo and Valentino 2012, 62–3, figs 122–3.
- 18 Isler 2009, 141.
- 19 The archeo-zoological analyses were conducted by Gerhard Forstenpointner and Gerald Weissengruber (University of Veterinary Medicine of Vienna, Institute of Topographic Anatomy, Unit for Archaeozoology and Comparative Morphology). Here we would like to express our sincere gratitude for the always fruitful collaboration.
- 20 Although just five individuals can be described with certainty as female animals (four cattle, one deer), the remaining skeletal elements of cattle, deer and small ruminants belong to slender individuals of short stature, indicating female animals.
- 21 Perhaps comparable to the three polished stone axes from Monte Polizzo found in mid-6th-century layers that might refer to older Neolithic and Bronze Age ancestors, although they have not been in use and served more as a status symbol. Mühlenbock 2013, 407, fig. 7. A similar small stone axe was also found on Monte Iato in fill-layers for the construction of a square in front of the late archaic house (I-V 210).
- 22 Kistler and Mohr 2016, 83–6; Kistler *et al.* forthcoming; Öhlinger *et al.* forthcoming.
- 23 Kistler and Mohr 2016, 83–6, with figs. 4–5; Kistler and Mohr 2015.
- 24 Kistler *et al.* 2013; for plumed ware as Archaika, see Kistler *et al.* 2017.
- 25 Morris *et al.* 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004; Ferrer Martín 2013, 227–8.
- 26 Morris *et al.* 2004, 202–3, 207.
- 27 Mühlenbock 2015; Mühlenbock 2013; for a definition from an ethnological sociological point of view, see Rode 2011; Mückler 2012.
- 28 Mühlenbock 2015, 242–8.
- 29 Mühlenbock 2013, 407; for the capeduncola vessels as tradition-related items, see also Mühlenbock 2015, 252–5; Mühlenbock 2008, 184–6; Ferrer Martín 2013; Ferrer Martín 2012, 234–8; Ferrer Martín 2010.
- 30 Morris *et al.* 2003; Morris *et al.* 2004.
- 31 Morris *et al.* 2003, 282–4.
- 32 Öhlinger 2016a; Öhlinger 2015a, 89–97; for revitalisation movements, see Dietler 2010, 70; Wallace 1956; for ancestralising strategies, see Hall 2002, 23.
- 33 Albanese Procelli 2006, 58.
- 34 For the dwelling, see Kistler *et al.* 2015, 142–51; Kistler *et al.* 2014, 178 ff.; Isler 2009, 169; for the deposits, see Kistler *et al.* 2017, 165–9; Kistler *et al.* 2015, 145–9; for microbiological analysis of deposit 2, see Margesin *et al.* 2017; Öhlinger *et al.* forthcoming.
- 35 Isler 2008, 139; Isler 2009, 185.
- 36 This would make sense as the deposit was created in the course of building the late archaic banquet house, where the southern half of the native dwelling was destroyed by the north wall of the house to ritually and symbolically link the banquet house to the older native building. See Kistler *et al.* 2015, 153; Kistler *et al.* 2017.
- 37 Half of the 30–40cm-wide pit was destroyed by a foundation trench of a Hellenistic wall.
- 38 For Montagnoli di Menfi, see Castellana 2000; Monte Polizzello: Panvini *et al.* 2009a; for Colle Madore, see Vassallo 1999; Öhlinger 2015a, 161–9.
- 39 Isler 2009, 159, 162–7.
- 40 Öhlinger 2016a.
- 41 See Öhlinger 2015a, 167–9; Russenberger 2012, 109–10 with further references.
- 42 Russenberger 2012, 110.
- 43 Öhlinger 2016b; Öhlinger 2015a, 186–93.

- 44 Sector D, in front of the southern fortification wall. Directly beside the new oikos building B, the round building A as former festive place remained intact. Panvini *et al.* 2009a, 91–121. Öhlinger 2015a, 79–81, 83–5.
- 45 Öhlinger 2016b; Kistler and Mohr 2016; Kistler and Mohr 2015.
- 46 Kistler *et al.* 2015b, 132–8; Kistler *et al.* 2014, 158–69; Kistler *et al.* 2013, 233–9.
- 47 Kistler and Mohr 2016; Kistler and Mohr 2015; Öhlinger 2016b; Kistler *et al.* 2015b.
- 48 Kistler and Mohr 2016; 92–3; Kistler and Mohr 2015; 394–8; Kistler *et al.* 2015a, 527.
- 49 Kistler *et al.* 2017, 167–8; Öhlinger *et al.* forthcoming.
- 50 Kistler *et al.* 2017, 167, fig. 13. Also in the late archaic banquet house several parts of deer antlers came to light, among them a well-preserved one (V 1802) with cut/truncated ends. Isler 2009, 185 with further references.
- 51 Kistler and Mohr 2016, 89–92; Kistler *et al.* 2014, 177–9.
- 52 Preliminary results of Gerhard Forstenpointner.
- 53 Isler 2009, 185, fig. 48.
- 54 Morris *et al.* 2003.

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## Chapter 2

# Greek Sicily: A World Apart?

Franco De Angelis  
University of British Columbia,  
Vancouver

If one enters the words ‘Sicily’ plus ‘world apart’ in quotation marks into the Google search engine, the results will reveal just how frequently Sicily is presented, in both scholarly and travel literature, as a world apart.<sup>1</sup> Various distinguishing features are usually singled out for this world apartness, from society and politics, through art and landscapes, to food and cuisine. The travel literature usually combines all the historical periods and cultures of Sicily, as is only to be expected, since its purpose is to market it to as wide an audience as possible for commercial purposes.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, travel literature is based on a kernel of plausibility beyond mere commercialism, for its pitches would otherwise not be convincing or effective. There can be no doubt that the world-apartness that we see in Sicilian travel literature takes its cues from real geographical, historical and cultural circumstances found in scholarship, which similarly abounds with descriptions of Greek Sicily being ‘a world apart’, as in Robin Osborne’s excellent textbook, *Greece in the Making, 1200–479 BC*.<sup>3</sup>

But the question remains: to what degree was Greek Sicily a world apart from contemporary Greece and the wider Mediterranean world? While it is not the intention of this paper to deny Greek Sicily’s regional features – the thrust of my research has always been to attempt to reveal them – my aim is twofold. First, this paper seeks to provide an explanatory framework for these differences, which are usually presented negatively. Second, this paper also seeks to counterbalance these differences by addressing the similarities with the wider Greek and non-Greek worlds. These similarities are becoming increasingly evident through recent approaches stressing mobility, interconnectedness and decentring.

### **Some historiographical and political developments**

We must begin by discussing the modern explanatory frameworks that have been used to account for Sicily’s, and in particular Greek Sicily’s, differences, for it is not merely by chance that the ‘world apart’ way of thinking has come into being. For this we need to look at some crucial historiographical and political developments over the past 150 years. The constraints of space mean that I can only flesh out the broader developments, using big generalisations to do so.

The development of Italian-language scholarship on ancient Greece as a whole from before the unification of Italy in 1861 to the aftermath of the Second World War in 1945 was quite minimal.<sup>4</sup> While one thinks of such outstanding figures as Paolo Orsi and Gaetano De Sanctis who published extensively on Greek archaeology and history before the outbreak of World War II, most Italian-language classical scholarship was devoted to ancient Rome. This was only fitting given the creation of the Italian nation-state with its capital in Rome, whose ancient glories provided a sense of national pride and direction.

Ancient Greece, by contrast, was generally the role model of other western European nations and their colonies, former and current, since the later 18th century.<sup>5</sup> The learned travellers of the Grand Tour began this development by seeking first-hand experience of ancient Greece. Italy was initially a major attraction for these travellers, because of the

impressive ancient Greek monuments that could be seen there, but the attraction was also aided by the fact that the Ottoman Turks ruled Greece, making it less accessible to foreigners. These developments happened simultaneously with two others that redefined ancient Hellenism. While ancient Hellenism remained the dominant inspiration for Europeans, some of Hellenism's branches started to be deemed more important than others. The American Revolution and the creation of the modern Greek nation-state supplied the prime stimuli. The events surrounding the American Revolution compelled European empires to reassess their settlement and colonisation policies and to favour mercantile endeavours and federalist associations. In this light, ancient Greece, rather than Rome, served as the better model. American independence witnessed intense debates about the relationships between ancient Greek metropoleis and their so-called colonies (a Renaissance mistranslation of the ancient word *apoikia*, which technically means an independent 'home away'<sup>6</sup>). The independence of the American colonies led to the ancient Greek colonies gaining their independence in the scholarly mindset, as well as to the further entrenchment of the mistranslation of the ancient terminology.

Independence, however, was only a temporary victory for modern scholarship. The creation of the modern Greek nation-state, following liberation from the Ottoman Turks, caused a number of problems. Greece naturally became the focus for discussions of Hellenism in all its temporal and spatial manifestations.<sup>7</sup> When Athens was chosen as the capital of this new nation-state in 1834, mainly because of Athens' associations with its impressive ancient counterpart, it was a watershed moment. Ancient Athens appealed to Europeans because it had defeated the Persians, just as Europe's single biggest political foe, the Ottoman Empire, was slowly but surely being defeated. Ancient Athens, moreover, was quite sensitive about its ethnic and racial purity, something meaningful to modern Europeans, both at home and in their colonies, as they gained control of the world and its many peoples. Europeans worried that cultural mixing would engulf them in harmful ways. Ancient Athenian democracy also appealed, as modern fledgling democracies began to emerge. This provided yet another way to distinguish Europeans as politically different from the Ottoman Turks and their stultifying sultans. In Athens, ancient evidence and modern mindsets came together and gave rise to a new framework in which to appreciate and study the history of ancient Greece. Within this new paradigm of ancient Hellenism, the long shadow of marginalisation inevitably began to be cast on such regions as Sicily.

This new configuration of Hellenism is most clearly seen in the history of ancient Greece published by the Englishman George Grote in the mid-19th century.<sup>8</sup> Grote played a significant role in shaping our current narrative of ancient Greek history, and he is often regarded as initiating the field's professional start.<sup>9</sup> He spoke of the Hellenisation of non-Greeks in the colonies, but the relationship was distinctly one-sided in favour of the Greeks: 'the ascendancy of a higher over a lower civilization . . . the working of concentrated townsmen . . . upon dispersed, unprotected,

artless villagers, who could not be insensible to the charm of that superior intellect, imagination and organization'.<sup>10</sup> Hellenisation represented the cultural transformation of backward lands otherwise inhabited by people 'of rude pastoral habits, dispersed either among petty hill-villages, or in caverns hewn out of the rock'.<sup>11</sup> Grote allowed for fusion between incoming settlers and existing natives,<sup>12</sup> but this fusion was cast in a racialised discourse characteristic of the time of a debased and inferior end product caused through miscegenation.<sup>13</sup> The Greeks were brought down, in other words, via 'unrestrained voluptuous license' and thus 'from partaking in that improved organisation' of Athens and Greek city-states around the Aegean Sea.<sup>14</sup> With these sentiments Grote reinforced the practice of Hellenocentrism and Athenocentrism, whose legacies are ever-present today in both subtle and overt ways. In effect, ancient Greek history came to be inserted into the paradigm of nationalist historical writing. Athens, ancient and modern, was the capital and pinnacle of Hellenism, centred in turn on Aegean Greece.<sup>15</sup> The Greek 'colonies' were on the periphery, backward in their development and always measured against the yardstick of Athens and Greece. It is for these reasons that Greek Sicily's differences are usually presented in a derogatory manner.

The implications of all this for our discussion of world apartness are as follows. We currently have two paradigms of how to study Greek Sicily that overlap little and are not in sync.<sup>16</sup> The non-Italian paradigm has set the larger narrative framework for Greek Sicily, generally excluding it from mainstream attention, while the Italian one has generally practised excellent regional history. Efforts on both sides, especially in the last decade, are being made for a more coherent and integrated picture of the ancient Greek world, thanks to two developments in particular. First, as many European nations lost their overseas colonies in the generation following the Second World War, efforts turned among many of the former colonisers and colonised to decolonisation, to exposing and eliminating colonialism in all its facets, including in scholarship. The main scholarly tools employed were Marxism and postcolonialism. Such studies have generally focused on everything that colonialist and imperialist approaches tended to ignore or downplay (such as local native histories, agency, resistance, synergy, hybridity and diasporas, or, put another way, a multi-sided frontier history). Second, in this same generation, there has been a distinct distancing from 'Cold War-like' regional approaches to historical writing with little or no integration to a world of interconnectedness involving the interplay of local, regional and global forces, in which the themes of mobility, connectivity and decentring are stressed.<sup>17</sup> This is based on the recognition that the Mediterranean's mobility and connectivity were owed to its microregional nature involving the unequal distribution of natural resources; ecological diversity and the ease of communication offered by the Mediterranean Sea helped to create a decentred mosaic of interaction and interdependence.

The process of integrating the regions of the ancient Greek world into a larger narrative is still far from complete – hence this paper.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, while the 'world apart' tag is

doing much to help generate tourism to Sicily, this labelling is ultimately constructed, I would argue, on the less positive perspectives of the island's history and culture. The times have changed, with a reversal of fortune and greater appreciation of things once viewed adversely. But times generally change faster than scholarship. So the question remains: how apart was Greek Sicily's world?

### **World apartness tested: differences and similarities**

In the second part of this paper, I turn to testing the world apartness of Greek Sicily by summarising the similarities with and differences from Greece.

It needs to be said outright that this is an exercise in comparison. While this might be blatantly obvious, for all the talk that has existed since the 19th century in comparing Greek Sicily to Greece, it is amazing that the terms of this comparison are either assumed or at best vaguely defined. We must recognise that the very language we still use to frame this comparison is simplifying and binary in the very blocs of 'Greek Sicily' versus 'Greece'. If we apply the postcolonial and microregional perspectives discussed earlier, we complicate the picture and start to break down the large generalisations on which they are based. To be effective, of course, comparison should involve precise points and take into consideration as complete a picture as possible of the various sides being compared.

Grote put Athens and Greece on a pedestal, as discussed earlier, although to do so he had to favour Athens at a particular period (its Periclean democracy, pretty much) and only the convenient parts of Greece and Greek history that fitted his framework. However, it has to be remembered that elites in pre-democratic Athens married other Greeks and non-Greeks, such as Thracians,<sup>19</sup> and admitted migrants to citizenship, such as the potters Sikelos and Lydos in the time of Solon.<sup>20</sup> Elites in democratic Athens had to deal with a change in societal mindset in which differences of wealth, status and extra-regional connections had to be played down or at least not openly exhibited.<sup>21</sup> Democracy caused this in Athens, but other parts of Greece, like classical Macedonia, continued to be more like Sicily. It should not be surprising to learn, therefore, that Macedonia and the Hellenistic world that resulted from the Macedonian conquest of the East were excluded and/or given short shrift in Grote's history of Greece.<sup>22</sup> The messy borderlands of antiquity were not appealing and did not deserve the same kind of attention and inclusion as democratic Athens, whose earlier history was simplified to create the binary opposition needed in this new historical framework.

The recent approach of Robin Osborne represents the kind of way forward that I am promoting here. While he allows for, as we saw earlier, Greek Sicily being a world apart, he does so in a more nuanced ground-up manner that limits this world apartness only to particular features and time periods that can be established after careful consideration. For him Sicilian Greek geography, society and politics stood out, but this was due to conditions that were immutable in the case of geography and regional in the case of society and politics. But the crucial difference with earlier approaches is that he does not dismiss such factors as

existing or having existed in Greece itself. As he carefully puts it, Greek Sicily had:

... two faces. One face maintained that they were part of the world of mainland Greek cities, sharing their values. The other face belonged in a world where Greeks were only one group among many, competing and cooperating by turns with rather scant regard for ethnic origins. The continuing history of the cities of Sicily repeatedly displays the tension between these two sides . . . The importance of the events of 480 BC [i.e., the Persian and Carthaginian Wars] in this ongoing story lies in the fact that only by understanding the difference between what went on in the Greek mainland and what went on in Sicily can we understand the divergent histories of the two areas. Along with the Persians, the mainland Greeks repelled the cultures of the east: classical Greece was culturally isolated in a way that archaic Greece had not been. But the defeat of the Carthaginians at Himera meant no such divorce for the western Greek world . . . The world of classical Greek Sicily was in many ways but the archaic world writ large. The same could not be said of the world of mainland Greece.<sup>23</sup>

We can build further on this careful approach by extending it and the comparative exercise underlying it. In the rest of this paper, I intend to do so by challenging some of the 'myths' of Greek Sicily that still linger thanks to the outdated scholarly framing discussed earlier, and I draw in particular on the results of my latest book.<sup>24</sup>

The process by which Greeks settled in Sicily is traditionally referred to as 'colonisation', but the misleading nature of this label, caused ultimately by a translation mistake in the early Renaissance mentioned above, and the way it has spread its tentacles into every facet of scholarship have been recognised since the 1990s through postcolonial perspectives.<sup>25</sup> The main point to make here is that calling Sicilian Greek cities 'colonies' is extremely unproductive, as it assumes that Greece was fully developed at the time of establishing these 'colonies' with the complete cultural package simply implanted in the 'new world' of Sicily.<sup>26</sup> Instead, state formation and urbanism emerged in Greece and Sicily at the same time, in the 8th century BC. Given the archaic Mediterranean's connectivity, similar developments would have occurred across wider areas, both Greek and non-Greek.<sup>27</sup> Parallel patterns can be noted in the archaeological record: when the Greek cities of Sicily witnessed building booms in the mid-7th century and again in the mid-6th century, similar booms were occurring at the same time in, say, Greece, Etruria, Rome, Carthage, and wherever else was connected to this multilateral world.<sup>28</sup>

Greek Sicily, however, was still something of a world apart, but that was mainly because the landscape presented some unique opportunities for establishing cities from scratch. Most of the existing local native populations resided away from the coasts in hilltop villages in the island's interior.<sup>29</sup> Some palaeoecological evidence exists from across Sicily that land clearance occurred with the arrival of Greeks: vegetation and forests were cleared and the space organised. Regular town planning is often the main difference singled out, but some of the other 'firsts' – for 'firsts' they were – include cemeteries placed outside the world of the living, bigger agoras, possibly with commercial functions from the 7th century BC, craft production in rural areas and larger territories.<sup>30</sup> It is better

to understand ancient Greek culture in Sicily, and abroad more generally, as dynamic, and shaped by new physical environments and peoples, both Greek and non-Greek, as in the case of town planning.

This general point serves as a good link to saying something about the development of Sicilian Greek societies. Literature dating from the 5th century BC onwards abounds in labels related to land and wealth applied to the Sicilian Greek elite of the archaic period.<sup>31</sup> There are Syracuse's *gamoroi* ('land-sharers'), Megara Hyblaea's *pakheis* ('thick ones'), Leontinoi's *hippeis* ('cavalrymen') and Akragas's *periporphyra ekhein himatia* ('wearers of purple'). The surviving literary sources contain other labels that denote/connote status and that refer to events of the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Some of these labels, particularly *aristoi* and *agathoi* ('best' and 'good'), were used to mark status elsewhere in the Greek world in the archaic period. However, one cannot simply assume that all these labels existed in archaic Greek Sicily without first addressing a basic yet fundamental issue. One of the myths that I hope to have shattered in my book is the idea, held by such distinguished scholars as Moses Finley and Sophie Collin Bouffier, that Greek Sicily's societies lacked inequality until the second half of the 6th century, some two hundred years after Greeks had first established themselves on the island.<sup>32</sup> Based on such a view, the status labels just enumerated are to be regarded as inventions or exaggerated self-fashioning projected back to earlier times. Is it anachronistic, therefore, to talk of an elite social class in Sicily before the mid-6th century? Did these later elites also consciously model their behaviour on Homeric society, since they had no previous history and identity and needed to be taken seriously by elites in the Greek homeland?<sup>33</sup>

The answers to these questions are resoundingly negative. Inequality can be inferred from the start of Greek Sicily's history, when we take a closer look at the archaeological evidence and combine it with the written evidence.<sup>34</sup> Sicily's coasts were little populated and much land needed to be cleared; these are factors that influenced the social and economic decisions of the early Greek settlers. The control of labour became central, affecting the possible kinds of economic decision-making.<sup>35</sup> Elites, moreover, because they created their cities from scratch, placed themselves at the top of the social hierarchy, and held on to it until challenged by groups lower down the social ladder. There was no need to model their behaviour on Homeric society, whose very notion has recently been questioned.<sup>36</sup> The social history of archaic and classical Greek Sicily reveals a constant struggle between the classes for a greater share of status and wealth. In this respect, Greek Sicily is hardly a world apart socially from Greece; in fact, the settlers brought with them, continued and amplified contemporary social hierarchies.

Another major social issue that needs to be considered is democracy.<sup>37</sup> Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus claimed that democracies took root across the entire island in this period, and Thucydides made some statements during his account of Athens' invasion of Sicily that either mention democracies directly or contain details from which they have been inferred.<sup>38</sup> For these reasons Finley described this phase of

5th-century history as a 'democratic interlude'.<sup>39</sup> But in 1980 the late David Asheri rightly urged caution and said to expect much local variety under such umbrella generalisations, owing to previous conditions and current circumstances in Sicily's cities.<sup>40</sup> The case for democracy, moreover, is sometimes made in isolation without considering the full material record and social history of a city by scholars more interested in the history of democracy than in Sicilian Greek democracy *per se*.<sup>41</sup> Continuities can be seen in elite practices and lifestyle, along the lines first delineated in the archaic period. At the same time, a democratic wind blew through Sicily. Redistribution of land and wealth occurred in some cases, and redistribution was called for unsuccessfully in others. We may even be witnessing in the case of Tellias of Akragas, who is discussed in detail by Diodorus Siculus,<sup>42</sup> the emergence of new wealth buying status and class through investments in cash crops.<sup>43</sup> So, on balance, the picture suggests the creation of new social and economic elements in the second half of the 5th century BC, but on top of an old elite base that continued to remain firmly in place.

The developments in the Sicilian Greek economy implied by the story of Tellias can also be discussed more fully and on their own. If there is one thing that scholars and the general public alike think about when they consider the Sicilian Greek economy, it is wheat monoculture under the patronage of the goddesses Demeter and Persephone.<sup>44</sup> Although we might infer grain production in archaic Greek Sicily from the indirect evidence, and indeed as being important from its very beginnings, it is not until the 6th century that we have secure archaeological and epigraphic proof.<sup>45</sup> In any case, grain exports made considerable sense as an early economic activity, given the ideal environmental conditions, low labour requirements and the demand in Greece, but Greek Sicily was never a colonial wheat monoculture. Abundant evidence exists today for manufacturing, mining, fishing and other agricultural crops, particularly olives and vines, in the archaic period, shattering old stereotypes of an unchanging Sicilian Greek economy over a period of 400 years.<sup>46</sup> Put another way, the Sicilian Greek economy of the archaic and classical periods has emerged, through careful analysis of all the evidence, as being less apart than earlier scholarly accounts have reckoned.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to walk a fine line between distinguishing the usual and unusual features of Greek Sicily. I began by arguing that the world-apart characterisation of Greek Sicily is in fact grounded in realities that have long been recognised. The crucial watershed in grappling with these realities emerged in the mid-19th century, when nation-states and empires, the professionalisation of scholarship and so much else that we take for granted today took shape. At the same time, it cannot be doubted that, when taking a postcolonial and microregional perspective, Greek Sicily is more like Greece and vice versa than we have imagined. Sicily and Greece maintained enduring diasporic links right from the start of their conjoined histories. Their relationship was not one of centre and periphery, or of colony and state, or even of haphazardly overlapping regional trajectories.

Instead, the two regions were interconnected and interdependent throughout the archaic and classical periods, with Sicily forming an integral and important region of the ancient Greek world. The purpose here has been to introduce a more discerning and exact comparative methodology for investigating the relationship between two points on the map, one being the homeland from which migrants left to establish new lives in another. The intention in doing so is not to deny or dismiss Greek Sicily's world apartness, which, as argued earlier and elsewhere, certainly existed. The intention, rather, has been to reduce the gulf between Sicily and Greece, a gulf that is often taken for granted and that has been emphasised by historical and scholarly circumstances and thinking that go back to the second half of the 19th century, and to explain any regional differences with proper historical explanations free of earlier scholarly negativity.

One final point has to be made before closing. The original oral version of this paper was presented in London on 24 June 2016, the morning after the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum had taken place. A relevant parallel with ancient Sicily comes to mind. At the Congress of Gela in 424 BC, Hermokrates, one of the speakers, is said to have promoted a common Sicilian identity and coined the term *Sikeliotai*.<sup>47</sup> It is interesting to note how islands lend themselves to regional identities. Even so, the fact remains that this should not obscure the point, made here, that interconnectedness clearly existed and caused such reassertions of regionalism to occur in the face of the stresses of globalism.

## Notes

- 1 A search conducted on 3 July 2017 produced 87,700 results in 0.40 seconds alone.
- 2 A typical example of such travel literature can be found at <http://www.bredeson.com/sicily> (accessed 3 July 2017).
- 3 Osborne 2009, 329.
- 4 Momigliano 1966.
- 5 For what follows, see recently Ceserani 2012, 17–267; De Angelis 2016a, 5–8.
- 6 De Angelis 1998.
- 7 For the lead-up to this, and especially the role that diaspora Greeks played, see recently Hall 2018.
- 8 Ceserani 2012, 215–9; De Angelis 2016a, 6–7.
- 9 Macgregor Morris 2008, 247.
- 10 Grote 1846–56, 3:495–7.
- 11 Grote 1846–56, 3:494.
- 12 Grote 1846–56, 3:494–5, 498–9.
- 13 Macgregor Morris 2008; Challis 2010.
- 14 Grote 1846–56, 1:ix and 183–4.
- 15 De Angelis 2016a, 22–3.
- 16 De Angelis 2016a, 23–7.
- 17 Horden and Purcell 2000.
- 18 See also De Angelis 2016b; De Angelis 2019.
- 19 Davies 1971, *passim*; Sears 2013.
- 20 Robertson 1992, 137.
- 21 Morris 2000, 109–54.
- 22 Bayliss 2008.
- 23 Osborne 2009, 330.
- 24 De Angelis 2016a.
- 25 De Angelis 1998; Osborne 1998.

- 26 See recently Hall 2018, 239.
- 27 De Angelis 2016a, 98–101.
- 28 De Angelis 2016b.
- 29 De Angelis 2016a, 44–6, 53–6, 85.
- 30 De Angelis 2016a, 100–1.
- 31 The sources are collected in Collin Bouffier 1999. See also De Angelis 2016a, 149.
- 32 Finley 1979, 38; Collin Bouffier 1999, 363–4.
- 33 Collin Bouffier 1999, 364–72.
- 34 De Angelis 2016a, 146–54.
- 35 De Angelis 2016a, 167–79.
- 36 Whitley 2017, 724.
- 37 De Angelis 2016a, 193–4, 204–12.
- 38 Aristotle., *Politics*. 1303a–b2; Diodorus Siculus. XI.72.2–XI.73, XI.76.1–2; Thucydides. VII.33.1, VII.55, VII.58.1.
- 39 Finley 1979, 58.
- 40 Asheri 1980, 154.
- 41 So De Angelis 2016a, 193–4.
- 42 Diodorus Siculus. XIII.81–XIII.90.
- 43 For full discussion of the possible social and economic implications of Tellias, see De Angelis 2016a, 202.
- 44 De Angelis 2016a, 12, 18.
- 45 De Angelis 2016a, 233–4.
- 46 De Angelis 2016, 226–56, 271.
- 47 See Antonaccio 2001 in particular, discussing Thucydides III.90.1 and so many other sources and issues in a theoretically informed framework. Cf. also De Angelis 2016a, 204, for further discussion and references.

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# Chapter 3

## Colonial Encounters in Ancient Sicily

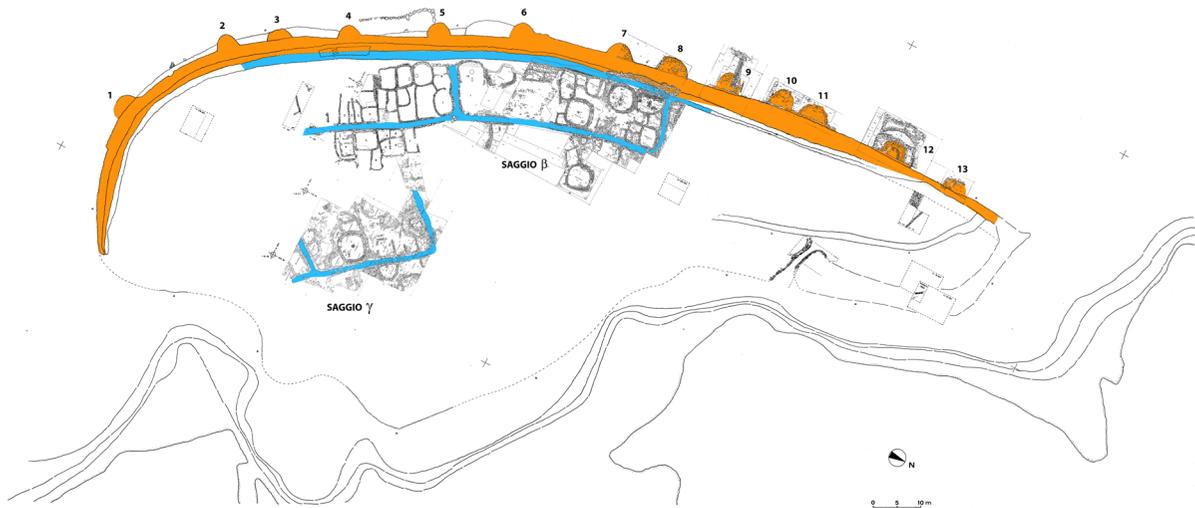
Francesca Spatafora  
Director, Parco Archeologico di  
Himera, Solunto e Monte Iato

The middle Bronze Age in Sicily provided the first opportunity in the island's cultural history for a unified cultural identity to be displayed, characterised by a certain consistency regarding its relationship with the rest of the Mediterranean. In fact, between the 15th and 13th centuries BC the different cultural *facies* that had, until that time, characterised the various territorial districts, joined together to form a united cultural horizon that covered the entire island. During this period the connection between the local population and groups of Mycenaeans and Cypriots continued. The network of relationships with the eastern Mediterranean became more widespread and intense, generating a complex culture in which it is difficult to distinguish the different individual contributions and therefore the local components from the Aegean ones.<sup>1</sup>

This integration is evident in the organisation of the space inside the settlements and through the typologies of funerary architecture and the composition of grave goods. According to this general overview, the presence of some particular categories of bronzes<sup>2</sup> allows us to localise in a specific area of central-southern Sicily the transit of people from the Cypriot-Levantine area and regular contact between both areas.<sup>3</sup>

It seems, however, that the western part of the island participated only marginally in this network of relationships. The numerous villages in this region, many of which were involved in maritime trade, have provided documentary evidence of direct connections with the eastern Mediterranean in only sporadic circumstances. For example, an ivory comb engraved with small circles found in a collective tomb at Marcita, which is similar to some items from Hama and Megiddo,<sup>4</sup> or the two fragments of Aegean pottery found at Erbe Bianche, near Trapani.<sup>5</sup> Only the settlement of Faraglioni on the island of Ustica, west of Sicily, stands out for its complexity and size (**Fig. 1**). However, despite its strategic location in the Tyrrhenian basin and its well-organised village, the settlement has not offered strong evidence for direct and continuous relationships with the Mycenaean or Aegean world.<sup>6</sup> In the last two centuries of the second millennium BC, the arrival in Sicily of various migrating sub-Apennine groups represented a crucial moment of the proto-history of the island, clearly marked by signs of discontinuity in the patterns of settlements and material culture. During the late Bronze Age, and again during the early Iron Age, the situation on the island could be considered the consequence of interactions and relationships that included the western region only marginally, this area adhering more to the traditions of the middle and late Bronze Age.

It was traditionally believed that, during the 10th and 9th centuries BC, contact with the eastern Mediterranean was the result of the Phoenician expansion towards the west along the same Mycenaean routes. It might, however, be more accurate to propose that these cultural encounters were the outcome of the frequent visits by groups of Euboean and Cycladic traders searching for raw materials, while heading towards the more favourable south Italian and Tyrrhenian markets. The only concrete evidence for these encounters, prior to the foundation of the Greek *apoikiai* and of the first Phoenician emporia, is the well-known bronze



**Figure 1** Prehistoric village of Faraglioni, Ustica (© Superintendenza Cultural and Environmental Heritage of Palermo)

figure of Melqart-Reshef (**Fig. 2**), now considered to be from around 1000 BC.<sup>7</sup> This important statuette suggests only sporadic contact between some eastern Mediterranean groups and the southern coast of Sicily during the first Iron Age.

In this period, specifically the 9th and the 8th centuries BC, some artefacts of Eastern and North African manufacture were discovered in indigenous settlements, but we are uncertain about exactly which groups of people imported this material.<sup>8</sup> Among these items are *Aegyptiaca*, such as an Egyptian scarab from an inhabited context at Monte Finestrelle, near Gibellina in western Sicily, dating to the first or second Iron Age to the beginning of the first millennium BC.<sup>9</sup> From the same chronological period three little blue glass scarabs were discovered in a tomb at Monte Finocchito, one of which Günther Hölbl considers as belonging to the so-called ‘Perachora-Lindos’ group, a class of scarab of Aegean production.<sup>10</sup> The occurrence of these objects indicates the broad range of contacts between groups of Greeks, Phoenicians and indigenous people in the central Mediterranean, exemplified by finds from the necropolis of Villasmundo, located on the left bank of the Marcelino River, near Syracuse.<sup>11</sup> The exceptionally important grave goods from this cemetery include the earliest Greek imports, numerous *Aegyptiaca* and various Oriental artefacts, which testify to a phase in Sicily corresponding closely with that at Pithekoussai on the island of Ischia, off the coast of Campania, Italy. A grave from the necropolis, dated to the last quarter of the 8th century BC, confirms the presence of imported Greek pottery from the same period, as well as gold and silver ornaments, and several scarabs similar to examples found in Egypt and Pithekoussai. It is also important to highlight the discovery in the grave of the oldest recorded pilgrim flasks in pure clay, which are considered a link between the east and west Mediterranean (**Fig. 3**).<sup>12</sup>

From the 8th century BC, corresponding with the arrival of Greeks and Phoenicians attracted by the central and strategic position of the island, Sicily’s political structure, economy and material culture were characterised even more intensely by dynamic processes of

interaction and cross-culturalism. I propose to examine here, from an archaeological perspective, the signs of commingling, integration and hybridisation produced by ‘colonial encounters’.<sup>13</sup> The mechanisms of reciprocity and strategies of adaptation had profound effects on the cultural identity of the groups involved in the ‘colonisation’ process, but this development did not necessarily include relationships of power.<sup>14</sup>

The Phoenician and Greek colonial foundations contributed to the creation of new dialogues of negotiation for the development of intercultural relationships. In western Sicily, for example, the Phoenician presence traditionally seems to have been confined to commercial interactions that brought no significant changes to social and cultural contexts. Recently, thanks to the many surveys made in western Sicily and an attentive reading of some archaeological contexts, it has been established that the territory affected by the permanent presence of the Phoenicians indicates the existence of relations with the local populations by the 6th century BC.<sup>15</sup> Small and medium-sized farming agglomerations, often scattered in the surroundings of the principal Carthaginian Phoenician centres and associated with the production of wine and garum etc., defined a complex rural landscape and were, in this part of Sicily, the sign of the economic and social influence of the Phoenician settlers. This group was already expanding by the late 5th century BC, as illustrated by the network of alliances between some indigenous people and Phoenicians against the Greeks. During the same period, the foundation of Greek cities along the coast appeared for a long time to be more linear, including the two colonies that mark the borders to the north (Himera) and the south (Selinus). However, it is difficult to frame the relationships with the local population purely from the perspective of simple bilateral interactions. By the 6th century BC the presence of Greeks in indigenous settlements and of native peoples in Greek cities is documented. This situation certainly accelerated the processes of integration and *métissage*. To evaluate these processes it is necessary to carefully consider some specific factors: the natural environment in which the settlement is placed; the



Figure 2 Bronze statuette of Melqart-Reshef; the arrows represent Phoenician trade routes (from Spatafora and Sciortino 2015)

organisation of urban space; the architectural forms; the customs in both domestic and funerary contexts; the forms of religiosity; and the social organisation of the settlement.

Research carried out in the last few decades has allowed us to verify recognisable changes, starting as early as the 7th century BC and becoming more clearly defined during the 6th. For an analysis of the individual situations and the various modes of interaction characterising relations between

Figure 3 Scarabs from Monte Finocchito (after Leighton 1999, p. 243, fig. 129, 22); scarabs and pilgrim flasks from Villasmundo (courtesy of P. Orsi Archaeological Museum-Siracusa)



Greeks and indigenous peoples up until the late archaic period, we can look at many recent studies.<sup>16</sup> In particular, the different approaches that the colonies followed with respect to their territory led, in certain cases, to a conscious affirmation of a self-defined identity made explicit, for example, in the traditional configuration of sacred sites.<sup>17</sup> In other situations there was a gradual grafting of foreign models onto local traditions, which led to a redefinition of urban spaces and the adoption of religious and funerary practices that differed from the traditional ones. It is clear that wherever the presence of ‘natives’ in Greek cities and of Greeks in indigenous settlements is well documented, such as in Monte Saraceno and Monte Iato, the processes of commingling gave rise to gradual ‘cross-breeding’ that was not only cultural but also biological.<sup>18</sup> In some local communities, however, there are signs of a certain resistance to integration even by those different peoples who were cohabiting. Such resistance was probably due to some form of self-reverentiality and/or an assertion of identity. For example, at Monte San Mauro in Caltagirone, tombs containing bodies buried in a crouching position in the bare earth are present alongside sepulchres of the Greek type.<sup>19</sup> While at Polizzello, in central Sicily, the funerary evidence shows a wide diffusion of the rectangular chamber tomb containing multiple inhumations, confirming the perpetuation of rituals and ceremonies that emphasised family ties and social relations in the difficult but close relationship with Greek communities.<sup>20</sup> In western Sicily there is also evidence of different forms of contact between the groups inhabiting that part of the island. At Monte

Castellazzo di Poggioreale, located in the hinterland of Selinous, the necropolis of Contrada Madonna del Carmine has turned up funerary and ritual typologies bearing witness to an early, significant process of integration, especially if seen in association with finds discovered in the domestic area, organised into a more regular, urban settlement from the mid-6th century BC.<sup>21</sup>

In this complex process of negotiation, other important indicators are religious ideology and the physical form of sacred spaces. Principally in central and western Sicily, the process developed from deliberate choices denoting a desire to assert one's identity through architecture and ritual.<sup>22</sup>

The most striking case is that of the Sanctuary of Polizzello, where the architecture of the monumental circular sacellums and the forms of the ritual are extremely traditional and simple, and contrast with the variety and quality of the offerings.<sup>23</sup> Elsewhere we can detect the synchronisation of traditional forms of worship and their association with the natural environment with forms of religiosity borrowed from the 'colonial' world but ideologically traceable to themes that were important to native populations, such as reproduction and fertility. From the mid-6th century BC at Sabucina, the circular sacellum was replaced by a rectangular oikos in which Demeter was worshipped.<sup>24</sup> Further to the west, in the Elymian city of Entella, a cult characterised in its most ancient period by the placement of votive offerings within rocky crags was later replaced by one dedicated to Demeter in a Thesmophorion situated, as was the norm, outside the urban settlement and which was in use at least until the mid-3rd century BC.<sup>25</sup> A process of slow and progressive hybridisation was in evidence in the early 5th century BC at Grammichele, in south-eastern Sicily, where the 'natives' and Greeks had developed two topographically distinct and typologically dissimilar sacred areas. From the Greek-style oikos of Madonna del Piano (late 6th to 5th century BC) came a large, terracotta figure of an enthroned goddess, but in form and style it finds parallels in contemporary Greek art.<sup>26</sup> From the same site came a torso of a kouros carved from imported Parian marble, the modelling soft yet solid.<sup>27</sup> The shrine at Pojo Aquja, although lacking permanent ritual structures, has nevertheless yielded a limestone figure of a seated goddess, combining exaggerated bodily forms with a simple modelling, which surely follows local traditions of stone carving and sculptural types.<sup>28</sup> Despite these anomalies, the statue was clearly inspired by Greek prototypes, whose presence indicates that the innovative religious practices were being adopted and reinterpreted by the local population.<sup>29</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Bietti Sestieri 1997, 475.
- 2 I refer to the well-known basins from Caldare, Milena and Cannatello, and to the fragments of Cretan amphorae with Cypro-Minoan signs from Cannatello (Cultraro 2009, 63).
- 3 Spatafora and Sciortino 2015, 221.
- 4 Nicoletti and Tusa 2012, 114.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Spatafora 2009, 509–11.
- 7 Falsone 1993.
- 8 Guzzardi 1991; Germanà Bozza 2010.
- 9 De Cesare-Gargini 1997, 373; Hölbl 2001, 37.
- 10 Hölbl 2001, 38.
- 11 Voza 1978, 108; Voza 1982, 170; Voza 1999, 63.
- 12 Albanese Procelli 2008.
- 13 Stein 2005.
- 14 Spatafora 2013, 37.
- 15 Spanò Giammellaro and Spatafora 2012.
- 16 Albanese Procelli 1996; Dominguez 2000; De Angelis 2003; Hodoss 2010; De Angelis 2010; Spatafora 2010; Spatafora 2016a.
- 17 Spatafora 2015; Spatafora 2016b.
- 18 Albanese Procelli 2003, 229.
- 19 Ibid., 233.
- 20 Albanese Procelli 2006, 57.
- 21 Falsone 1992.
- 22 Spatafora 2016b.
- 23 Palermo 2006, 90.
- 24 Ibid., 89–90.
- 25 Spatafora 2016c.
- 26 Rizza and De Miro 1985, 207, fig. 208.
- 27 Ibid., 223, fig. 226.
- 28 Orsi 1908, col. 132, fig. 2.
- 29 This article summarises my more extensive paper published in Spatafora 2013.

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# Chapter 4

## Grand Designs in Ancient Greece: Building the National Curriculum through Research and Play

Matthew Fitzjohn and Peta Bulmer  
Department of Archaeology, Classics  
and Egyptology  
University of Liverpool

### Background

The *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* project aims to embed research on the archaeology and history of the Greek world, including Sicily (c. 750–400 BC), within the primary and secondary curriculum in English schools. The project focuses on the creation of cross-curricular Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) teaching and a philosophy of learning through play to embed historical subject matter across curricula. This paper discusses how research on Greek Sicily can be used to enhance not only the history curriculum but also teaching, engagement and learning subjects across the national curriculum in English primary schools. We present the motivations and methods of our research-led cross-curricular teaching on Sicily, which offers a creative way to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding while motivating them to learn through stimulating, interconnected topics.

### Introduction

If you visited the British Museum exhibition, *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*, then you already know that the archaeology of ancient Sicily is fascinating. The challenge for the *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* project is to convince schoolteachers and pupils to engage with the archaeology of Sicily in the classroom.<sup>1</sup> The aim of the project is to enrich pupils' learning experiences, enjoyment and attainment, as well as to increase their knowledge of Greek Sicily. This paper demonstrates how current research on Sicilian archaeology (c. 750–400 BC) has been embedded within coherent and flexible cross-curricular teaching of the primary curriculum in English schools.

Although designed to align with the English national curriculum, *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* has great potential for international use in other educational contexts, as the content would enhance teaching within the equivalent US Level 2–5 Grade curriculum, Canada Grades 3–6, or Australia Band 2 Years 3 and 4, and Band 3 Years 5 and 6. The aim is to use our research on ancient Greek domestic architecture and daily life, as well as our ideas on embodied learning and play, and the role of habitual bodily practices on identity formation, in the creation of teaching resources.<sup>2</sup> The project combines the methods and outcomes of Matthew Fitzjohn's research with that of Peta Bulmer on material culture, identity construction and social organisation to create integrated cross-curricular materials to aid teaching the national curriculum.<sup>3</sup> A key feature is the use of LEGO™ as an internationally recognised material to encourage play and creativity.

The project has developed in the context of several major international agendas. The first is the need for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to engage with public, private and charitable organisations as well as local communities. Over the last 10 years there has been an increasing need for HEIs to be able to demonstrate the impact of their research on wider society.<sup>4</sup> Impact has been defined as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'.<sup>5</sup> *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* is an engagement project that seeks

to have significant impact on, and enhancement of, the experiences of teachers and children.

The project is also situated within international discourse about the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) teaching model. STEM education was developed in the mid-1990s to create coordinated curricula that integrated the four subjects in order to enhance student engagement and performance. Internationally, there has been considerable focus on and support of STEM education. STEM has been identified as strategically important to the success of the UK, and the government has backed programmes of activities in STEM subjects with the creation of the National STEM Centre, The National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, and the National Network of Science Learning Centres, which provide assistance for teachers' professional development, access to resource materials, curriculum development and advocacy. While there is much support for the model of STEM education, there is increasing evidence that suggests that STEAM, with the insertion of an 'A' for the integration of arts within STEM, is a more beneficial educational model.<sup>6</sup> This project contributes to the discussion about STEAM education by using the archaeology of Greek Sicily to emphasise the benefits of cross-curricular teaching that combines aspects of humanities teaching with STEM subject matter to enhance student engagement.

The main aim of this paper is to demonstrate how academic research, in this case on Greek Sicily, can be adapted for use as subject material for the history curriculum.<sup>7</sup> Further to this we present examples of how the materials generated by the *Grand Designs* project enhance teaching and learning within the wider national curriculum in English primary schools. We will illustrate how we have been developing resources on Greek Sicily that enable teachers to create a blended form of cross-curricular teaching, which blurs the boundaries between subject areas, and is intended to enhance students' understanding across the curriculum. The project has focused on Sicily for a number of reasons, not least because of our publications on the period of Greek settlement and, as the British Museum's 2016 exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest* and its associated publication have shown,<sup>8</sup> the history of Sicily provides a rich body of material not only for those interested in history, but also for other important subjects such as geography, and Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE). We start by introducing how the history and material culture of ancient Greece are taught within the national curriculum, and then move on to suggest some of the innovative ways that the archaeology of Greek Sicily can be used within STEAM teaching. We focus on five teaching examples from the project that illustrate how we have integrated Fitzjohn's research with our planning for STEAM activities.

### **The educational context: the national curriculum in England**

Since September 2014, all community and foundation schools, and voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools in England, have been required to follow the national curriculum. The curriculum is organised in four

Key Stages (KS), which cover pupils aged 5 to 16 years. The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, as part of the wider school curriculum. Twelve subjects, classified in legal terms as 'core' and 'other foundation' subjects, are taught within the curriculum. *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* is developing material that can be used at different points in the national curriculum. The focus here is on the history curriculum at Key Stage 2 (KS2), which is taught in Years 3–6 to pupils who are between 7 and 11 years old.

The national curriculum for history at KS2 aims to ensure that all pupils know and understand a coherent, chronological narrative, from prehistory to the present day of the British Isles. Beyond understanding the history of Britain, pupils are expected to understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world including ancient civilisations, and historical themes such as the expansion and contraction of empires. Studying these different historical contexts and narratives is intended to enhance pupils' ability to make connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.<sup>9</sup>

Pupils are also expected to learn how to use abstract terms such as 'empire' and 'civilisation', and understand historical concepts including continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance. They must then use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends and understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims. They should be able to discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed, and gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts.

Ancient Greece is taught as part of history within the national curriculum at KS2. Pupils should undertake a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the Western world. The guidelines for this topic are broad to allow teachers to develop content. Inevitably, teachers are drawn to the standard topics that are reproduced in most textbooks and online resources, which tend to focus on gods and monsters, painted pottery and the Olympic Games, and material is typically Athenocentric.<sup>10</sup> This focus is needlessly narrow, as the topic of ancient Greece affords an opportunity to learn about Greek civilisation more broadly, and to engage with, understand and apply many of the abstract terms and historical concepts that are required to be learnt as part of the national curriculum.

Some of this potential has been realised by the curators of the British Museum's exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*, which presented a fascinating narrative of Sicily's cosmopolitan history and identity, focusing on two major periods of immigration and cultural transformation. The curators had clearly carefully selected an array of beautiful and historically significant artefacts to create a narrative of Sicilian history from the 9th century BC that included the arrival of settlers from the Greek world, and the impact of

their encounters with the other inhabitants of the island, which helped to forge Sicily's unique history.

*Culture and Conquest* encouraged visitors to the British Museum to engage with not only the history and cultures of Sicily, but also with a wide range of stories and abstract ideas that were told through object biographies. To supplement the experience in the museum, the British Museum provided resources to support teachers in using the collections to teach topics on curricula from Early Years through to Years 12 and 13 (ages 4–16+).<sup>11</sup> These included in-museum sessions and online resources to support pre- and post-visit activities. The resources designed to support visits to the Museum offered guidance on how to experience the exhibition, and opportunities to embed the exhibition into cross-curricular learning in the history, geography, PSHE and citizenship curricula.<sup>12</sup> Suggested activities included discussions and activities about migration and movement across the Mediterranean, evaluating the benefits of migration to Sicily, and issues of identity and cultural interactions, such as how to recognise the traces of different cultural groups in material culture.<sup>13</sup> The information produced to support the geography curriculum illustrates the type of resources provided by the curators of the exhibition.

We have been developing similar cross-curricular activities in *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece*. There is, however, a significant difference between our activities and those of the British Museum. Although some of our activities focus on history, geography and PSHE, as the British Museum's activities do, we are developing cross-curricular activities that merge the arts and humanities with other subjects of the national curriculum, including STEM subjects.

### **Embedding archaeology in STEM teaching**

STEM teaching is recognised as a model of teaching that increases academic rigour in schools, and enables students to acquire skills and knowledge that are believed to be of growing importance to tomorrow's workforce. The goal of STEM teaching is not to promote some subjects to the detriment of others, although to some extent this has been a direct consequence of the endeavour, nor is it to create scientists, engineers or mathematicians; rather it is to integrate subjects and create interdisciplinary teaching and learning that increases students' performance across the curriculum.<sup>14</sup>

Over the last decade there has been an increasing drive to integrate art (and more broadly the arts) with STEM to create STEAM-based (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) learning. STEAM education is founded on the idea that there are significant overlaps and interconnections between the arts and sciences, which provide opportunities to strengthen learning and achievement, and offer new ways of creative thinking and different forms of problem solving,<sup>15</sup> given the arts' creative pedagogies.<sup>16</sup> While research on STEAM is still in its infancy, there is evidence that the integration of disciplines enhances pupil engagement in STEM and the acquisition of content knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the undoubted benefits of STEAM education to enhance the legitimacy of the arts (predominantly visual art,

design, music) to provide valuable perspectives on the world, the absence of other humanities subjects within this framework maintains the artificial boundaries that exist between subjects within the national curriculum. We would argue, as others have,<sup>18</sup> that we should think across curricula to break down these boundaries. As archaeologists, irrespective of our specialisms, we are inevitably interdisciplinary. As the other contributions to this volume show, research on the archaeology of Sicily is not limited by narrowly defined disciplines, but blends and is enhanced by complementary research questions and methods.

Our model of cross-curricular learning mirrors how archaeologists approach research to answer questions and solve problems. The project has inserted archaeology into STEAM and designed activities that build on different interests, ways of thinking and forms of learning. Our model of STEAM is designed to attract students who might not feel as interested or competent in a particular subject, such as history, art or one of the STEM disciplines. Our STEAM-based curriculum is rooted in the standards and learning aims of the national curriculum, and engages pupils through integrated activities that promote understanding.

### **Grand Designs in Ancient Greece**

*Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* is an AHRC Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement project, which developed from Fitzjohn's research on the houses and households of the Iron Age, archaic and classical periods of Greece and Sicily.<sup>19</sup> These publications made four key arguments that were the starting point for this project. First, our comprehension of life in ancient Greece is richer if we understand how individuals, households and communities organised themselves to construct the houses in which they lived, rather than only seeing houses as the spaces in which activities took place. Second, digital technologies and quantitative analysis offer exciting opportunities to enhance how we see and make sense of the ancient world. The third point is that houses and their associated artefacts can be used to examine identity formation, including those in cross-cultural contexts such as Leontinoi, Monte San Mauro and Monte Judica on Sicily. The fourth argument is that the tasks of daily life and experiences in the home caused bodily transformations that affected people's quality of life and altered perceptions of self, as well as the economic productivity of the household.

Another major driver in the development of this project is the success of teaching an undergraduate module, 'ALGY 310: Houses and Households of the Classical World', at the University of Liverpool. This module is based on a model of enquiry-based learning and LEGO to learn through play. Students examine and reconstruct classical houses, in both group work and independent guided learning, to explore broad-ranging themes including construction practices, display and consumption, hygiene and sanitation, gendered spaces in the home, and identity formation. Students develop their skills in digital technology (using social media to communicate within groups working on the same archaeological site, and SketchUp Pro to develop skills of 3D modelling, and Computer-Aided Design) and are encouraged to use

quantitative data analysis using software such as MS Excel to analyse household assemblages. The responses to these digital learning experiences and improvements in student performance stimulated the development of this project. While the project builds upon Fitzjohn's previous research and his university teaching, it aims to extend its impact beyond the university context.

In the UK, it has been recognised that successful schools utilise cross-curricular teaching, and consequently young people achieve higher academic standards and are able to make essential interconnections across subject areas.<sup>20</sup> Our project curriculum has a clear and targeted focus for students' learning, which has been identified as enabling more successful learning outcomes.<sup>21</sup> Although the project contributes to teaching and learning history within the national curriculum at KS2, its value extends beyond this to enhance the whole curriculum through the use of interconnected cross-curricular teaching and learning. For example, the collection of activities examining mosaics in ancient Greek houses provides material relevant to History KS2: 'Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world'. Our classroom resources, however, extend to additional subjects. After learning about the use of mosaics in ancient houses, students design their own mosaics on paper, which links to Art & Design KS2: 'creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design', and Mathematics KS Lower 2, Year 3: 'draw 2-D shapes'. Next, they create their mosaics using LEGO tiles and plates, which relates to Design & Technology KS2: 'select from and use a wider range of materials and components, including construction materials . . . according to their functional properties and aesthetic qualities'. Finally, they redesign them using a price list and limited budget, which links to Mathematics KS Lower 2, Year 3: 'solve problems . . . involving multiplication and division' and 'add and subtract amounts of money to give change'. Instead of pounds and pence, of course, students learn about drachma and obols, which brings us back to the national curriculum for history.

Our cross-curricular activities are also inspired by a philosophy of learning through play. Plato advised in *Laws* (1.643 B–C) that all children should play in order to learn, and play has been recognised as central to the way that children learn.<sup>22</sup> Playful learning encourages children to be engaged, relaxed and challenged, states of mind that are highly conducive to learning.<sup>23</sup>

Central to our activities is the philosophy that pupils should learn about archaeological evidence for houses and associated material culture from sites such as Naxos, Megara Hyblaea and Leontinoi through different forms of play. For example, pupils investigate houses through a combination of physical play, play with objects, and games with rules. Pupils construct houses with LEGO bricks and excavation ground plans, and are required to play with objects following particular rules, which develop thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Learning how to lay bricks so that the walls are robust enough to be played with, without falling apart, requires the players to develop flexible ways of thinking about LEGO bricks and how they can be used. Construction and problem-solving play are also associated

with the development of perseverance and a positive attitude towards unfamiliar challenges. Construction takes place in groups, which stimulates discussion between children and helps develop their language skills. Socio-dramatic play occurs when the players use LEGO to create 3D stories about life in Sicily during the 6th and 5th centuries BC.

We are actively collaborating with teachers, from nine partner schools, in a web-based platform and through face-to-face contact to explore and devise sets of cross-curricular teaching resources. The materials include both background information on the subjects covered, and actual teaching materials, including various activities. These resources were conceived together with the intention of providing teachers with all of the information they would need to teach a topic on daily life in ancient Greece. Thus some of the activities will require the teachers to have engaged with all of the background materials within their planning even if they do not use them directly in their lessons.

The majority of the documents have been created as MS PowerPoint presentations so that they can be projected in the classroom and viewed easily by pupils on laptops or tablets. We have also created text versions of each presentation and have the raw data as individual files so that teachers can use material within different software and create their own resources. In each presentation there is an initial teacher's slide, which provides context about the subject matter, and indications of how the content supports teaching the national curriculum. This initial slide also explains how each presentation is connected and can be used with other presentations; this is followed by slides that provide subject-specific text and images for use in class, as well as activities that can be used by the students. Our materials have been designed to enable teachers to engage their pupils and to help them to explain and provide information. The activities for pupils have been designed to support enquiry-based learning that allows pupils to explore concepts and expand and reflect on their understanding by investigating and playing.

All six teaching activities have been designed to support pupils' core knowledge and skills as outlined in the national curriculum. For example, the first set of materials covers the topic of archaeology as a discipline, including what classical archaeologists study and where they undertake their excavations. There is information and photographs that teachers can use to contextualise the topic and engage the students, as well as two specific play-based activities using LEGO to explore the topic (**Fig. 1**). Further resources extend this topic into the maths and geography curricula and offer activities that can be done both inside and outside the classroom. These activities may be followed by materials that provide the basis of many of the other resources that are about specific issues regarding houses, daily life and the family, migration and identity in ancient Greece (**Fig. 2**), which are based on Fitzjohn's research on sites and houses in Sicily or the settlement at Olynthus, on the Halkidiki peninsula of northern Greece.<sup>24</sup>

### Where on earth is . . . ?

'Where on earth is . . . ?' is developed from our use of GIS to investigate site locations and field survey data, as well as

## Story Starter Scenario: *The excellent excavation*

**LEGO education**

**Learning objectives**

- Express and develop ideas through collaborative discussion
- Portray characters, settings, and events in detail, based on inference and facts drawn from the information about archaeological excavations
- Explain how scenes fit together to provide a smooth transition, and how they form the fundamental structure of a story, drama or poem
- Construct a conclusion to the story, making use of transitional words and phrases, using sensory detail to convey character experiences and events
- Use different forms of writing including narrating a story, writing a newspaper report, or adding captions to a photostory
- Demonstrate the correct use of English grammar when writing and speaking
- Role play the story, giving feedback on others' performances

**Setting the scene**

The mattock hit something hard. Lucia, the famous Classical archaeologist, had been hoping to hear that sound. She recognised that they had found archaeology, but she did not know what it could be. They would have to excavate further.

The archaeologists in her team had already done a survey with special equipment to find out what was under the ground, and picked up lots of interesting pot sherds on the surface. They knew that there was definitely *something* under this farmer's field. Could it really be the city that Herodotus, the historian from Ancient Greece, had written about, 2500 years ago?



The team were so excited that some of them were giggling too hard to get on with their work, but they knew that they had to stay calm. They were professional archaeologists, after all. But if this really was the lost city of Archaeopolis, it would be amazing! They would be so famous! They would write books and be on TV!

Before all of that though, there were some decisions to be made, and some hard work to be done. Lucia and her team would have to roll up their sleeves, and get stuck into their work. Everyone had more energy now that they knew they had found something. Lucia called a quick team meeting to decide what to do next, and then everybody picked up their tools and got to work.

**What do you think will happen next?**



## Story Starter Scenario: *The excellent excavation*

**LEGO education**

**Building the story**

Ask the students to work in teams of five. Together they can brainstorm ideas, then use the Lego Story Starter kits to create a storyboard for a three or five scene drama about the excavation, and what Lucia and her team will find.

They should consider: the scenario, time and place, characters, props, and the main events.

- Who are the team of archaeologists? What skills do they have?
- What equipment will they use?
- How will the scenes form the structure of the story?
- What will they discover?
- How will you depict feelings of excitement, wonder, disappointment or confusion?

**Reflecting**

Encourage the students to discuss each scene of the story as they build.

- What are the essential details of each scene?
- Why are the scenes in this sequence?
- What is the resolution?
- What is the ending?
- Can the excitement be built further? How?

**Sharing and documenting**

Ask the students to present their story to the rest of the class in turns. Ask the students to focus on varying the style of their delivery when narrating or playing a character in front of the class, taking into account the needs of the listener. When recording and writing, ask the students to use descriptive language and adjectives.



**Extending**

- Use the StoryVisualizer software to write your story. Use photographs and include your story about the possible discovery of Archaeopolis
- Use the spinner to change the scenario
- Change the characters in the story



Figure 1 An activity to develop a story about an excavation and build scenes with LEGO

excavated material and ideas of place.<sup>25</sup> These classroom activities introduce and explain how locations on the earth are described, in terms of latitude and longitude (Table 3). The main aim of the lesson is to support learning in geography and history with computing, but it also helps students to understand how archaeologists permanently record the exact location of ancient buildings or artefacts.

Table 1 Activities from *Sicily: Culture and Conquest* that have been designed to support the geography curriculum

<b>Introduction:</b> Sicily is an island in the Mediterranean Sea. From early times it was a centre of trade where agricultural produce, wool and cattle hides were traded for mineral resources such as metal ores.
<b>Instructions during visit:</b> Use the exhibition to explore the nature of an island and the way in which the sea acts as a line of communication enabling the movement of resources and people.
<b>Instructions during visit:</b> Consider which neighbouring mainland areas have acted as starting points for interaction between Sicily and different people around the edge of the Mediterranean basin and beyond.
<b>Instructions during visit:</b> Discuss why the island was seen as such an important area of land within the region.
<b>Follow-up activity:</b> Compare an ancient map of Sicily with a modern map. Is it possible to identify key locations and features on the ancient map using information recorded on the modern map?
<b>Follow-up activity:</b> Create a chart indicating the pros and cons of invading Sicily in terms of its location, geographical features and natural resources.
<b>Follow-up activity:</b> Compare and contrast the geography of Sicily and the British Isles or perhaps Sicily and Australia.

The document and potential lessons can provide content for different parts of the KS2 national curriculum, including history, geography and computing. For geography, pupils are required to 'identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night); use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping'.<sup>26</sup> Students investigate the Mediterranean using Google Earth to find the location of important ancient Greek sites in Sicily and mainland Greece, and they use the

Table 2 Outline of activities and enquiry-based learning strategy for a lesson on the history and geography of Sicily and the Greek world

<b>Engagement</b>	Gain attention by showing a picture of the Mediterranean. Ask them if anyone knows where Greece is located.
<b>Exploration</b>	Pupils work with a learning partner to decide where Greeks in the ancient world lived.
<b>Explanation</b>	Show slides on where the Greeks settled around the Mediterranean and Black Sea and introduce migration, and explain that some of the most important Greek cities were in Sicily.
<b>Expansion</b>	Pupils explore the location of Greek sites using Google Earth.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Pupils measure distances between sites. They can think about the size of the Greek world and they can think about how we might know that the people who lived in Sicily were Greeks.

## Greek houses in Sicily?

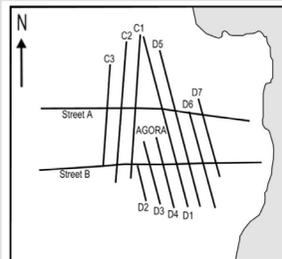
### City planning at Megara Hyblaea

Archaeological excavations at the city of Megara Hyblaea on the east coast of Sicily have revealed a system of streets that were laid out when the city was first established. As well as aiding organised movement around the city, it seems likely that the streets were planned in a grid system in order to fairly divide up the available space and provide the settlers with equal amounts of land.

There are no surviving written records to explain who established the city, or why they organised it in this way, so archaeologists must try to work out the motives of the early settlers by examining the remains of the street plan and the way the land was used.

If you were an archaeologist, how would you explain the division of Megara Hyblaea into equal portions? Why would people decide to organise their city this way? Why do you think having equal amounts of land was important?

The plans below show the layout of the city of Megara Hyblaea, and a close up of the centre of the city.



### Greek houses in Sicily

In planned Greek cities like Megara Hyblaea and Naxos, the houses were usually very simple stone structures consisting of one large room, a door in the south wall, and a thatched roof. Over time, these houses were expanded with the addition of more rooms to the side.

Compared with the houses excavated at Olynthus, the space inside these houses was very simply organised. Can you imagine living in a house without separate bedrooms, a living room, or a kitchen? What would it have been like?



### Rock-cut houses at Leontini

At the nearby city of Leontini, rather than building houses from stone, people lived in houses that were dug out of the rock. It would have felt like living in a rectangular cave! These houses are unusual – neither native Sicilians nor Greeks normally lived in houses like this. Could they represent a new, hybrid, style of home?

### Integrating communities at Leontini

As well as the rock-cut houses, people began to bury their dead in rock-cut tombs. No normal Greek tomb types have been discovered, even though pottery and other items indicate that Greeks lived at Leontini. The evidence suggests that the cultures of native and migrant peoples had mixed to produce a whole new culture.

Figure 2 Example of information for teachers about Greek Sicily

## Where on earth is...?

Below is a map showing some of the most important sites in ancient Greece. Can you find out their exact positions? You will need to use Google Earth to find the latitude and longitude of each site. You can double click on the name of the site in the Places. When you get to the site if you look at the information in the bottom right of the window you will find the latitude and longitude. Write down the coordinates of each of the sites. When you are at each place you can look around to find the archaeological site.

**Akragas**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Gela**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Himera**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Naxos**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Katane**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Leontinoi**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Megara Hyblaea**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Selinous**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Syracuse**  
---'---' N  
---'---' E

**Additional questions**

- Which site is furthest east – Katane or Megara Hyblaea?
- How many degrees east must you go to get from Gela to Syracuse?
- How many degrees west must you go to get from Naxos to Selinous?
- How many degrees south and east must you go to get from your school to Himera?

Figure 3 Latitude and longitude enquiry-based learning activity using Google Earth and archaeological sites in Sicily

sites to explore the concepts of latitude and longitude (**Table 3**). The sites are of historical importance and discussed in the activities supporting the history curriculum (**Fig. 3**).

## Building houses at Naxos

The processes involved in building can reveal fundamental aspects of the ancient economy and cast light on the temporality and spatiality of daily life in archaic Greece. Our starting point is that the creation of architecture involves the process of transforming raw materials (such as earth, stone, wood and vegetable matter) into cultural products (the materials for construction and the components of a house).<sup>27</sup> Understanding the process and costs of construction can provide insights into the economy of a community as well as of the life experiences of the

Table 3 Outline of activities and enquiry-based learning on latitude and longitude, and the location of sites in Sicily

<b>Engagement</b>	Gain attention by introducing the location of the school in Google Earth. Point out to pupils the latitude and longitude
<b>Exploration</b>	Pupils work with a learning partner to decide what the numbers and the N and E represent
<b>Explanation</b>	Show slides on how we locate points on the earth, and latitude and longitude
<b>Expansion</b>	Pupils explore the location of Greek sites using Google Earth and record the latitude and longitude
<b>Evaluation</b>	Pupils solve additional questions about coordinate systems

households of sites like Naxos and Megara Hyblaea. These ideas of construction have formed the basis of a series of cross-curricular activities.

Building houses at Naxos is the start of a number of playful activities, in which pupils learn to build an archaic house from Naxos (**Table 4**). They work in a small group using LEGO to build a scale model of Casa 1 at Naxos (**Fig. 4**). The processes of construction can be used to discuss properties of materials and methods of construction, and the model is also used for imaginative role play, creative writing, art and mathematics-based learning.

Maths activities introduce pupils to the planning and organisation needed to construct a house and a city, as well as the ability to carefully measure and calculate the use of space. There are several possible lessons for those in Year 3 of KS2, including measuring and scaling contexts; measuring, comparing, adding and subtracting; lengths (in LEGO studs as well as cm/mm); and measuring the perimeter of the rooms and the house.

## Light and privacy in a house

One of our interests has been how domestic architecture creates particular habitual bodily practices: for example, how houses have been designed to enable or restrict movement, to create particular experiences with the specific location of light or heat sources, and how different types of structures will have played a role in the experiences of everyday life and on identity formation across the Greek world.<sup>28</sup>

## Stronger walls, better houses!

The secret to building stronger walls, and therefore better houses, is to make sure that the Lego bricks on each new row overlap the gaps between bricks on the row below. Walls are weaker if the gaps between bricks are repeated for two or more rows.

The ancient Greeks knew about building stronger walls. This house at Halaesa in Sicily, which was established in 403 BCE, used rows of overlapping stones to make it stronger. Can you build walls like these using Lego?



Take a look at this wall. It has not been built very carefully. You can see that the gaps between the bricks are in the same position on each row.

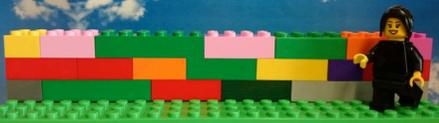




It wouldn't take much for a disaster to strike, and the walls to start falling down!

There must be a better way to build Lego walls!

In order for you to build stronger walls, and better houses, all you need to do is cover the gaps in the first row with bricks on the second row, and so on.

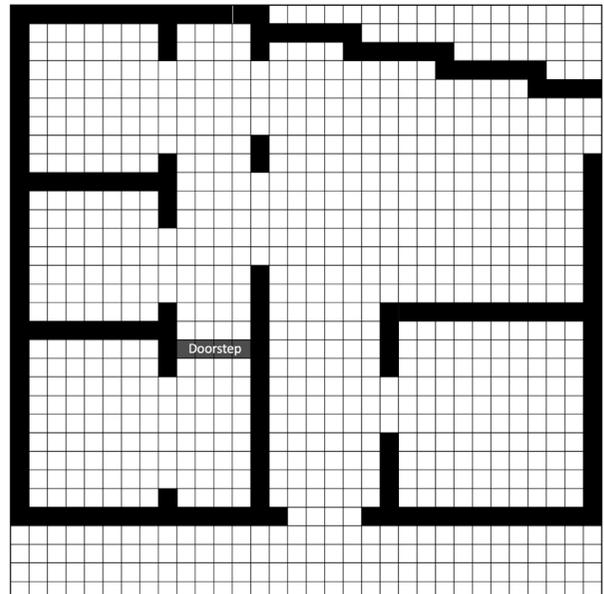


## Lego plans: Casa 1 at Naxos

**Building your Lego house**  
You will work in a small group to build a Lego scale model of Casa 1 at Naxos. Use 4 Lego baseplates from your Story Starter Set for the floor of the house, and take a selection of white bricks of different sizes for the walls. Build 2 rows of bricks, carefully following the plan below.







**Figure 4 Learning through play: construction of Casa 1 at Naxos**

These materials focus on how houses were designed to enable or inhibit the path of light and the need for artificial sources of light (Table 5). They provide teachers with sources that can explain the principles of light, and activities that allow pupils to explore mathematical questions regarding the geometrical properties of ancient Greek houses and visibility. The first activities focus on visibility and whether houses were designed to create privacy. Pupils calculate what can be seen from the very centre of the house by drawing a visibility diagram, using the LEGO house plans (Fig. 5). This activity can be extended to allow pupils to calculate the total area of visibility within the house. The second set of activities allows pupils to expand on these ideas to explore lighting and darkness within the home.

### Conclusion

Ancient Sicily is not specified in the English national curriculum, but the *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece* project has taken some of the most recent research on Greek Sicily into schools, to enhance how pupils understand ancient Greece, as well as how they use and understand important historical abstract terms and historical concepts. The archaeology of Sicily is an ideal case study for this project because of the quality of preservation of Greek domestic structures and cityscapes. As our research has shown, we can learn more about life in Greek Sicily when we understand not just where people lived but how the communities organised themselves to construct dwellings. We have taken this idea about construction and the nature of daily life to develop ways in

<b>Engagement</b>	Gain attention by introducing reconstructions of houses
<b>Exploration</b>	Pupils play in groups to construct their house
<b>Explanation</b>	Show slides on building strong walls and thinking about the importance of saving time and energy to build strong walls
<b>Expansion</b>	Ask pupils to explore the house that they have built examining lengths of walls and perimeter of the house
<b>Evaluation</b>	Pupils solve additional questions about the scale of the LEGO model in relation to the real world

**Table 4 Outline of activities and enquiry-based learning strategy for a lesson on house construction incorporating maths challenges**

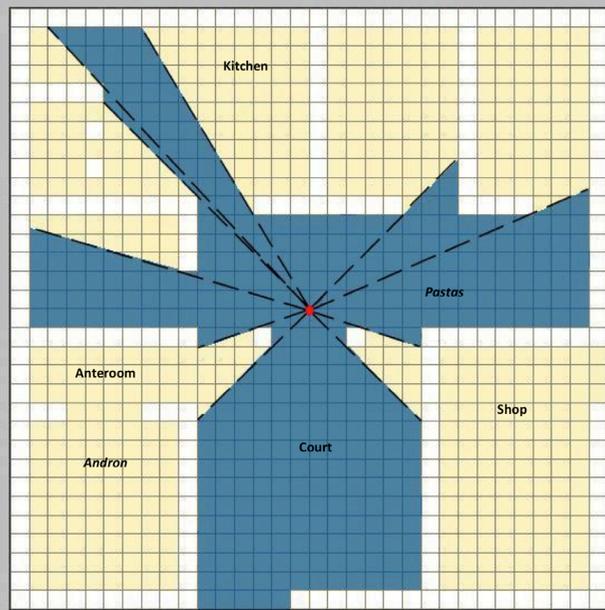
<b>Engagement</b>	Gain attention by introducing the idea of privacy
<b>Exploration</b>	Pupils explore the idea of privacy by considering what can be seen from different locations in their house
<b>Explanation</b>	Show slides on calculating lines of sight and visibility
<b>Expansion</b>	Ask pupils to explore the plan of their house by calculating lines of sight and total area of visibility
<b>Evaluation</b>	Pupils compare the different houses and levels of visibility to think about differences between different houses; there are additional questions about the scale of the LEGO model in relation to the real world

**Table 5 Outline of activities and enquiry-based learning strategy for a lesson on light and privacy in a house incorporating science challenges**

## Visibility in the ancient Greek house

### Example

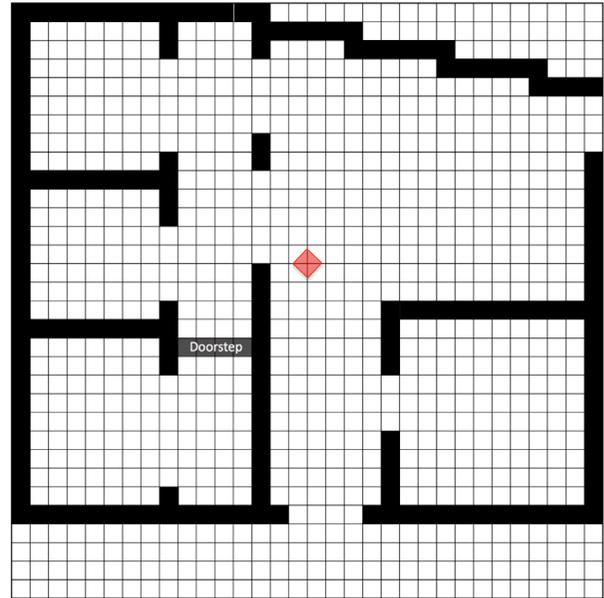
In the example below, the area shaded in blue represents the range of visibility of the girl from next door, when standing in the very centre of the house (marked with a red dot).



### Public and private space

Penny can see into almost every room in the house from her position in the *pastas*, except for the shop, which does not have an internal doorway, and the anteroom and *andron*. The view of these rooms is obscured by the column. If Penny was a very naughty girl, just this once, she would only need to take a couple of steps into the court, in order to see into the anteroom. If you were Penny, do you think you would keep still, as you were told, or would you take a sneaky look into the anteroom?

## Visibility: Casa 1 at Naxos



### Reminder

Line up your ruler so that the edge passes through the red square in the centre, and the corner of a doorway or column. Draw a straight line from the red square, past the corner, and up to an obstacle.

You will have to draw lots of these lines from the centre to work out how much can be seen. Don't forget that columns get in the way! Colour in the area that Penny can see from her position at the centre of the house.



Figure 5 Light and privacy enquiry-based learning activity using Casa 1 from Naxos

which primary school pupils can learn about the ancient world by building their own model houses with LEGO. The pupils also learn about the roles that domestic architecture and artefacts have played in the creation of identity when they play with their models, LEGO minifigures and props to create historically informed stories and produce storyboards and comics to explain the narrative.

We have adopted a strategy to integrate arts and humanities subject matter with subjects from across the national curriculum. Our STEAM educational model is filled with cross-curricular activities and based around play. The pupils do not know that they are being subjected to a STEAM model. They might not even be aware that they are learning through play when they take part in *Grand Designs* activities. Our aim is to inspire pupils to want to learn about the ancient world because it is fascinating and fun to do so, and to encourage them to develop their skills and knowledge in mathematics, science, problem solving, understanding location and geography, and other parts of the curriculum. In addition to the benefits of cross-curricular learning to the pupils, this project has the potential to place Sicilian archaeology at the forefront of future generations' understanding of life in the ancient world.

## Notes

- 1 *Grand Designs in Ancient Greece: using classical archaeology in cross-curricular teaching in primary and secondary schools* is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council Project. Reference: AH/N003543/1, <http://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FN003543%2F1> and <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/archaeology-classics-and-egyptology/research/projects/grand-designs/>.
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# Chapter 5

## A Toreutics Workshop between East and West: New Data and New Thoughts about the Sant'Angelo Muxaro Gold Objects

Gioconda Lamagna  
Museo archeologico regionale 'Paolo Orsi', Syracuse

Dario Palermo  
Università di Catania

### Archival documentation in the 'Paolo Orsi' Museum in Syracuse, and the archaeometric examination of the seal rings

#### *Gioconda Lamagna*

The ensemble of gold items from the site of Sant'Angelo Muxaro in Agrigento comprises material that remains unparalleled from Sicily in the proto-historic and archaic periods. It includes the famous embossed cup in the British Museum, London, of which a graphic relief drawing (**Fig. 1**) has now been achieved at the Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum in Syracuse for the first time, and the two heavy gold seal rings, one depicting a cow suckling a calf (inv. 45905) and the other a wolf (inv. 46517), both engraved by the artist cutting deeply into the body of the bezel, both in Syracuse (**Fig. 2**).<sup>1</sup>

We know, however, that the ensemble of pieces was originally much larger. There were, in fact, four gold cups still preserved in the 18th century in the collection of Andrea Lucchesi Palli, the bishop of Girgenti. Two of them were decorated with bovids arranged around the central basin and two of them were plain, but all share a common decoration of little dots around the rim. There were also perhaps originally at least three rings, if together with the two mentioned above we might also consider another in the National Archaeological Museum in Florence, which, although smaller in size, is closely comparable in terms of form and style and bears a winged griffin figure (**Fig. 3**).<sup>2</sup>

Much has been written in the past about these precious gold pieces, often highlighting their function as veritable symbols of rank, so it is difficult to imagine what we can say that is new. But, now that the London cup, the only survivor of the original group of four, has visited Sicily for the first time since it left, probably in the late 18th century, and been reunited with the two seal rings in Syracuse,<sup>3</sup> it has allowed us to re-examine the precious surviving ensemble, making it possible to complement and enrich the body of knowledge already established and to offer some new considerations on the subject. In the text that follows we will present some data on these gold pieces derived from a careful rereading of the archival material left by the archaeologist Paolo Orsi, including inventories and notebooks as well as other archive material preserved at the Syracuse museum. This is unpublished data for the most part because Orsi managed to publish only a short preliminary report of the first season of regular excavations undertaken in Sant'Angelo Muxaro in the years 1931–2.<sup>4</sup> He sadly died a few years later, in 1935, leaving the second report completely unpublished.

We start with the ring showing a cow suckling a calf, the discovery of which undoubtedly played a major part in initiating the first, extremely successful, archaeological investigations at this site. This ring was a chance discovery, made between 1919 and 1920, and it soon gained notoriety, with some experts dismissing it as of doubtful authenticity and others condemning it as a definite fake. Despite this disparity of opinions, Paolo Orsi bought it a few years later for the museum at Syracuse and tried several times, by interviewing locals and obtaining statements from them, to verify the exact location of the ring's discovery.<sup>5</sup> This became all the more important and urgent after the discovery of the similar ring with the wolf, which was found

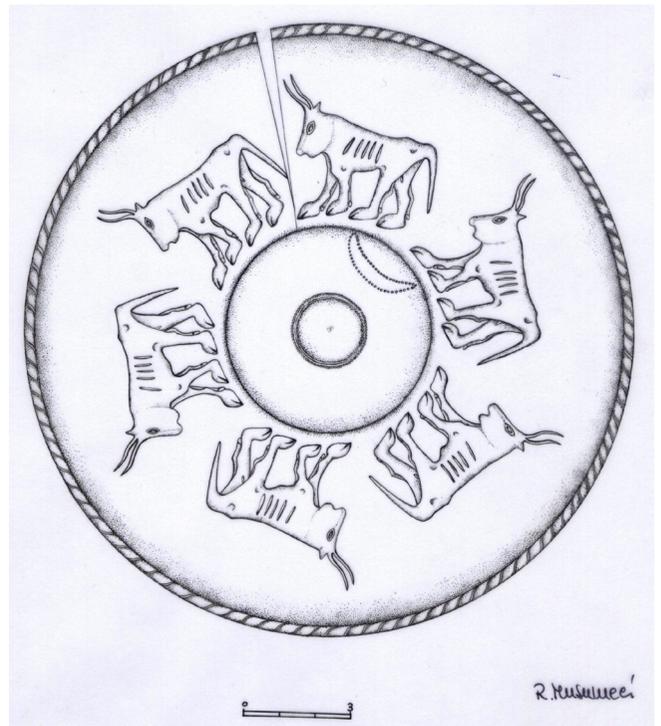


Figure 1 Gold libation cup with bulls, 7th century–first half of 6th century bc. British Museum, 1772,0314.70 (drawing by Rita Musumeci)

in 1931 during the official excavation season conducted at the site of the monumental tholoi, or beehive tombs, of the southern necropolis of the Colle di Sant’Angelo.

Although differing somewhat in their details, the accounts gathered by Orsi agreed on one point: this ring had been found at a certain distance from the Colle Sant’Angelo, in an area of necropolis located close to Monte Castello. In 1932, after having acquired this information, Orsi commenced excavations in the Sella di Sotto Castello, near the south-eastern slopes of the mountain in the area indicated as the location of the supposed find. It was a brief, but meticulous exploration of the site, carried out in the presence of the very person who had discovered the ring. The earth was turned over from top to bottom in a single day, digging all the way to the natural stratigraphic layers in search of any evidence that the ring might have come from that area.<sup>6</sup> The results, however, were not those that had been hoped for. In fact, a series of simple burials were discovered in the bare earth, devoid of grave goods, which could be linked to the medieval cemetery belonging to the castle whose ruins stood at the top of the hill. Nothing that was found connected this context with the gold ring. In the following days the searches were extended to the surrounding area, bringing to light at the foot of the mountain the remains of what Orsi hypothetically identified as a small shrine hinted at by the materials collected in its vicinity. This included a deposit of black-figure Attic pottery, mainly kylikes depicting Dionysian subjects, lekythoi and also fragments of amphorae decorated with rays emerging from the foot (Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, Syracuse, inv. 47229), all mixed with locally produced pottery. Based on this discovery and other evidence, it was concluded that the ring with the cow and calf was more likely to have come, not from a necropolis used by indigenous people but, barring the possibility that they did not locate the actual find-spot for the ring or perhaps due to

a deliberate misdirection from the finder, from an area that has in fact yielded much later tombs.<sup>7</sup> Even the extensive surveying and searches of the surrounding area have not found signs of ancient burials, but rather remains from other contexts. These discoveries must be taken into account, possibly even with the result that new surveys and excavations should be undertaken at the site, in order to try and determine the context of the ring’s origins with greater accuracy.

The second topic to be presented here concerns the reconstruction of a group of gold jewellery items from the 1931 excavations. We know from Orsi’s notes (notebook no. 148, 17 May 1931) that a number of precious objects were also found within tomb II. This group consisted of ‘four gold rings, one with a ribbed band [and] the others convex concave, very thin and light in shape. A little bead of gold ditto, a bead of amber and traces of others’, the find-spot of which is even sketched in a plan in one of the drawings in Umberto Zanotti Bianco’s notebook.<sup>8</sup>

Until recently, however, only three gold objects (apart from the two seal rings) were identified with certainty as coming from Sant’Angelo Muxaro and preserved in Syracuse museum. These are also from tomb II: a heavy ring formed out of a cylindrical rod, a second one rolled out of a sheet, and a little bead (inv. 46518–46520). The first of these especially, because of its shape and heavy weight, is certainly not a match for any of the four rings described by Orsi. Scholars have thus encountered a considerable number of difficulties when attempting to connect the three gold items in the museum to at least some of the five described in notebook no. 148.<sup>9</sup> Light was shed on the matter by the discovery of a handwritten note by Luigi Bernabò Brea (**Fig. 4**), in the medal collection archives of the museum in Syracuse.<sup>10</sup> Here, apart from the two seal rings (nos 45905 and 46517) mentioned at the end of the group, there is a record of no fewer than eight gold items from Sant’Angelo



Figure 2 Seal rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro, Agrigento, 7th century–first half of 6th century bc. Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, Syracuse, inv. 45905 and 46517 (objects not to scale) (photo: Germana Gallitto)

Muxaro being taken to Montecassino, Italy, during the Second World War,<sup>11</sup> three with inventory numbers (46518–46520), plus five without. It has thus been possible, and also on the basis of the measurements which match, to identify the five items without a number (inventoried in 2016, after their identification, as nos 104740–104744) (Fig. 5b) as the gold items actually drawn and described by Orsi in notebook no. 148 (Fig. 5a) and the three other pieces inventoried as nos 46518–46520 (Fig. 6) as the precious items – possibly from the same tomb II – that were stolen from the museum, but fortunately quickly recovered.

A brief allusion to this sequence of events is preserved in the inventory of the Syracuse museum ('The gold items later stolen by the workers were most likely from sep. [sepulchre]

Figure 3 Seal ring with griffin, 7th century–first half of 6th century bc. National Archaeological Museum, Florence (photo: Mario Iozzo)



Zanotti 2'), but more details are documented in a letter from Orsi to Zanotti Bianco:

31-VII -31. Thanks to the energetic intervention of the RR. Carabinieri everything was saved: the big ring, the thin ring, the spherical bead. The fact that they were stolen during the excavation was sad; sadder still was that they had long since passed into the hands of . . . who played dead until he finally opened his mouth when the RR. Carabinieri intervened. And finally, it was very upsetting that the thieves were the two best-treated workers, the donkey-keeper and the watchman who got 25 lire a day.

It was later ascertained that the objects had not been stolen during working hours but at night, by employees left to guard the excavations who had then gone on to explore the site by candlelight, according to their own accounts.<sup>12</sup>

We do not know if Orsi mistrusted some of the workers on site, perhaps even before the theft of the five gold pieces, and was therefore suspicious enough to record the next spectacular find in his first language, German, rather than Italian. Perhaps using this language as a kind of secret code, he reported the discovery of the gold ring with the wolf, which was found inside tomb VI on 21 May 1931, in notebook no. 148. If we are correct in believing that Orsi was distrustful of certain members of his team, then this coded note would have been understood by only his most trusted collaborators, the restorer Giuseppe D'Amico and Zanotti Bianco, and so only they would have been aware of the exceptional discovery. Although some words cannot be made out and remain uncertain, the meaning is clear in this translation.<sup>13</sup>

But this morning Count ZB [Zanotti Bianco] personally made a discovery of the first order; towards the middle of the length of the bed, on a level with the left side he found under a cm of solidified gypsum, as if embedded into it [?] and close to [?] 3 small attic lekythoi, a magnificent ring, twin to that of Don Peppino.<sup>14</sup> Same size, thickness, with an animal deeply engraved. Only I, Dam [D'Amico] and ZB know about it. All the workers were absent. Let's keep quiet, we'll talk about it later.

In conclusion we must mention the non-invasive archaeometric tests performed on all the gold items from Sant'Angelo Muxaro preserved in the Syracuse museum. These are the first examinations of this kind ever carried out on the gold jewellery from the site, and they were conducted by the Non-Destructive Analysis Laboratory (LANDIS) at the Monuments and Archaeological Heritage Institute – National Research Council and by the Southern National Laboratories of the National Institute of Nuclear Physics in Catania. The Appendix at the end of this paper outlines the analysis, but what follows is a summary of the most significant results, even though this is only preliminary data. On the basis of the examinations undertaken, it would seem that the two gold seal rings differ in their composition. The one with the representation of the wolf must have been made of native gold, given the low copper content present (less than 2 per cent), while the one with the cow was produced from gold to which copper had possibly been intentionally added, given that it shows very much higher levels of the metal (over 7 per cent). The proportion of silver in the two rings also varies greatly. With such differing proportions of component elements the results suggest two distinct 'batches' of gold for the two rings, and because they also present significant differences with regard to their technical execution we could be looking at the work of different artisans who were nevertheless working in the same area.<sup>15</sup>

During the course of these analyses we have also sought to understand the true nature of a reddish patina that completely covers the engraved surfaces of the ring with the wolf. This substance was present at the time of discovery, for Orsi mentions it in his publication of 1932, pointing out 'traces of red (perhaps from the wax of the seals) in the cavity' of the object (Fig. 2).<sup>16</sup> This is probably an ancient substance. The examinations carried out seem to exclude the possibility that it could originate from surface oxidation of copper or from contamination from nearby metal objects among the grave goods. Despite there being an absence of patina on the ring with the cow, we cannot rule out the possibility that it was originally applied: this ring was found 'very dirty', as Orsi himself notes in the descriptive sheet of inventory, and 'was washed, and even scrubbed with sand, by a goldsmith who got it for £.One hundred'. It is therefore possible that in the case of this object the patina, if present, was removed by harsh cleaning immediately after its discovery.

For the moment we have no further information to add, save the hope that we may be able to further extend the investigations already begun on the objects in Syracuse and that the other gold items linked more or less directly to Sant'Angelo Muxaro (the British Museum cup and the ring

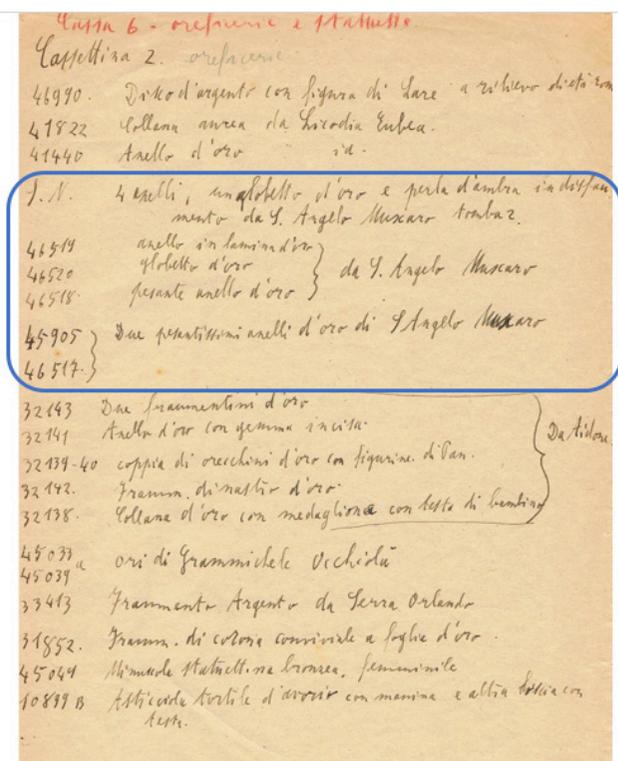


Figure 4 Manuscript recording list of materials from the Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum departing for Montecassino. The box highlights the section concerning the gold of Sant'Angelo Muxaro (photo: Germana Gallitto)

with a griffin in the National Archaeological Museum, Florence) will also be analysed, in order to compare all the data thus acquired, making it possible to establish a complete picture of the entire ensemble of exceptional objects.

### Techniques, typology and style: the meaning and historical context of the gold items

#### Dario Palermo

The careful examination I was able to make of the British Museum's gold cup on the occasion of its exhibition in Sicily, comparing it with the two rings in the Syracuse museum, has convinced me that it belongs to the same ensemble as the other cups, now lost, from the bishop of Girgenti's collection, and the third, smaller ring in the National Archaeological Museum, Florence, with the figure of a griffin (Fig. 3). All of these items share the same style and chronology, and all can be attributed to a single location: the indigenous site of Sant'Angelo Muxaro.<sup>17</sup> Analysis of the different techniques used, however, showed that this group of vessels and jewellery cannot be the work of a single artisan, but must have come from a workshop specialising in toreutics or embossed and chased decorative metalwork, where craftsmen of different technical competencies would have worked. This is also confirmed by the differing composition of the gold, which indicates that the pieces were produced using different raw materials (see Appendix). We are still left with the far from easy task of placing the ensemble in a historical context and decoding its meaning.

The surviving cup, together with the three rings, in fact constitutes precious and unique evidence of an artistic achievement in decorative metalwork and jewellery-making

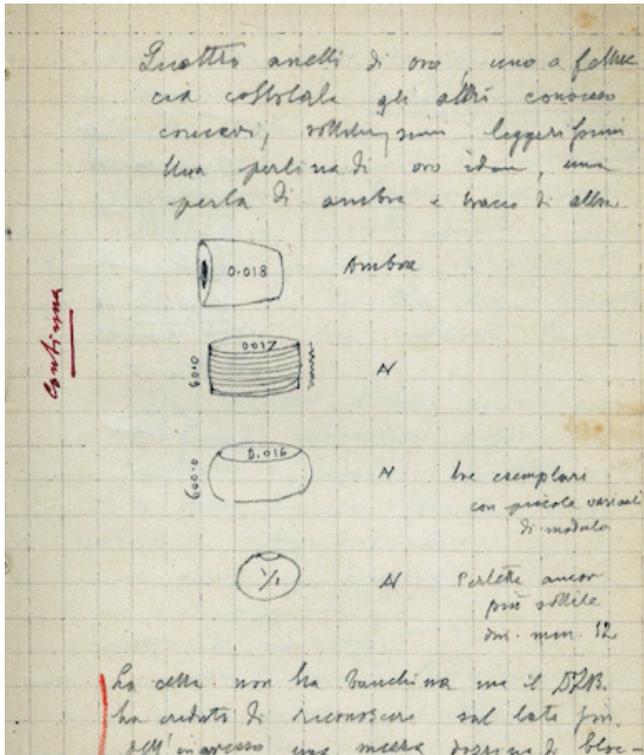


Figure 5a Description of the amber pearl and the five gold items from tomb II at Sant' Angelo Muxaro (notebook no. 148, 17 May 1931) (photo: Germana Gallitto)

that was completely without parallel in Sicily prior to the discovery of these objects. It is imperative that their origin, location and chronology be identified if at all possible. The pieces also supposedly bear witness to an important event, even though it is difficult to determine what the nature of this may have been.

The cup was built up from a gold disc and then the gold was hammered into its final shape. It was created using a wide range of different decorative techniques. First, repoussé or embossing, as seen in the figures of the six bulls, which are all identical and therefore made using a

single punch, stamped six times onto what was to be the outside of the cup. The craftsman calculated the space available on the surface perfectly in order to fit in all the figures evenly before the actual process of hammering commenced. The outline of the bulls was then emphasised by engraving the lines into the metal slightly, using a sharp-tipped burin. The tiny irregularities of this craftsmanship are the only elements that differentiate the six bovine figures, which are otherwise indistinguishable.

Other techniques used include intaglio, for the manufacture of the braided cord that forms the lip of the cup, and punching, executed with a burin (also applied, as far as we know, to the lost, undecorated cups), to make the crescent shape in the bottom of the cup. This design is made up of 53 dots executed with a series of carefully measured strokes using a pointed tool, hammered in from the outside with sufficient force to reveal the tip inside the base of the cup, but not so hard as to pierce the double sheet of metal. Granulation was also used on the cup, an ancient and technically challenging process where a dense series of gold granules are applied to the surface. On this cup there are a total of 84 preserved granules, forming two superimposed lines on the base and one on the edge of the cylindrical bezel in the centre.

An easier technique was used to produce the rings, their shape clearly achieved by casting in a mould and figures created by gouging into the surface of the bezel with a burin. The intaglio carving on the ring with the cow is fairly rudimentary, and possibly not completely finished. Where it occurs it was evidently done with a flat-tipped tool, as was also the case for the smaller ring in Florence. On the ring with the wolf, the intaglio process was very detailed, especially in the execution of the pelt and claws, which were clearly engraved with a fine-tipped burin.

Whoever executed these objects thus possessed a remarkable mastery of the techniques of working in gold, and at the same time used a typological and iconographic repertoire that draws both from the Eastern and the proto-

Figure 5b The corresponding gold objects, 7th century–first half of 6th century bc. Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, Syracuse, inv. 104740–104744 (objects not to scale) (photo: Germana Gallitto)





**Figure 6 Gold rings and pearl from Sant'Angelo Muxaro, perhaps also from tomb II, 6th–5th century bc. Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, Syracuse, from top to bottom, inv. 46518–46520 (objects not to scale) (photo: Germana Gallitto)**

archaic Greek worlds.<sup>18</sup> The way in which they sketched the wolf, however, endowing it with a thick mane of fur, claws on its paws and a flat muzzle, shows that they had no direct knowledge of the animal but merely repeated an iconography that had originated elsewhere, modifying it in an incongruous manner.

The outer face of the bottom of the cup in the British Museum also reveals a significant detail. There is a small circle (0.5cm diameter) inscribed upon it, positioned with a compass at the exact centre of the foot. Starting from this, and centred on one point of its circumference, there is a second circle of equal size, superimposed on the first by the width of the radius. The intention of whoever traced these two circles is not clear. They form the geometrical symbol of the so-called *vesica piscis*, later known from the work of Euclid and often considered to be endowed with symbolic meanings.<sup>19</sup> It cannot be ruled out, however, given its possible alchemical or at least symbolic interpretation (the circle with the dot in the centre is in fact the alchemical symbol of gold), that it could have been added in the 18th century. Its eventual owner, Sir William Hamilton, might have recognised this symbolism and been attracted to the cup for this reason. We consider it more likely that these are the first lines of an intended six-petalled rosette motif, to cover the entire circular base of the cup. Motifs of this kind are quite common in Oriental art, such as the Phoenician cups of Nimrud,<sup>20</sup> or the beautiful Phoenician cup from Idalion in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (**Fig. 7**).<sup>21</sup> It is also found on the lid of ivory pyxides found in the Idaean Cave in Crete.<sup>22</sup>

We may conjecture that the artisan had started to execute a composition similar to the one we see in the examples mentioned above, but then stopped, perhaps because of an error in calculation. The rosettes would have been very small and perhaps difficult to form. Alternatively, the maker might have intended to insert something else in the bottom

of the cup. The shape of the cup, as R.D. Barnett noted, is certainly derived from that of the Syro-Phoenician bull-cups,<sup>23</sup> and it particularly recalls a group of cups from the Assyrian palace of Nimrud in the British Museum.<sup>24</sup> Objects of this type are well known from geometric Crete, and the iconographic repertoire is widespread in the Eastern world, except that of the so-called ‘wolf’, which instead refers back to geometric prototypes.<sup>25</sup> The griffin, which is more basic in execution, possibly because of its small size, has, however, stylistic and technical features that compare with the other animals, such as the manner in which the rib cage is indicated by thick lines in relief and, above all, the claws, which are identical to those of the wolf.

Despite these stylistic comparanda, all is permeated by a sense of form that is neither Greek nor Eastern in nature, which initially hinted at these gold works being the product of a local and probably indigenous workshop, yet one nevertheless trained in a Greek environment, perhaps located in Gela.<sup>26</sup> With regard to the presence of such a large accumulation of precious metalwork – the total for the whole ensemble can be calculated at not less than 800g/1kg – we have written in an earlier publication about how the foundation of Gela, which took place in 690–689 BC, contributed to the conspicuous enrichment of indigenous cities in the hinterland during the course of the following century. This seems more prevalent in those settlements far enough away to not have been directly targeted for conquest. This cultural enrichment can be detected in Sant'Angelo itself through an increase in the number of burials and associated grave goods in the tombs of the necropolis.<sup>27</sup>

A find of such magnitude and so completely unparalleled, however, requires its own unique explanation, one which may perhaps be glimpsed by analysing what can legitimately be referred to as the ‘decorative programme’ found on these gold pieces. A few decades ago, Ernesto De Miro proposed a Hellenocentric reading of the cup’s decoration, comparing it



Figure 7 Phoenician cup in electrum from Idalion, 6th–5th century bc. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AO20135 (photo © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Hervé Lewandowski)

with the herd of bullocks in Stesichorus's *Geryoneis* and interpreting the golden cup itself as a symbol of the  $\delta\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\varsigma$   $\tau\omicron\chi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\epsilon\omicron\nu$ , that is, the golden bowl that Helios, the sun god, lent to the hero Herakles, in order to fly in search of the stolen herd.<sup>28</sup> This proposal has not yet received the merit it deserves, perhaps because the hypothesis is so audacious, or perhaps also because it would require that the date of the objects in question be chronologically shifted to the age of Stesichorus, that is, the end of the 7th or the first half of the 6th century bc. The theory is nevertheless far from unrealistic. Indeed, it fits perfectly with the mentality and social practices of the Greeks during the archaic period, who used their self-perceived cultural superiority and the wealth of their literary and artistic heritage as veritable weapons of conquest, seduction and attraction, wielded against the 'barbarous' peoples whom they encountered. We cannot share all of De Miro's opinions, specifically the attribution of these objects to a Cypriot-Carthaginian-Phoenician environment, since this milieu offers no exact comparisons and it is not merely sufficient to refer to ancient contacts between Cyprus and Sicily in the Middle and late Bronze Ages or to the few fragments dating to the archaic period found in Gela.<sup>29</sup> We would nonetheless add to his observations the presence of what we consider clearly to be cosmic symbols, namely the crescent engraved on the base, symbolising the moon as Selene, and the round bezel in the

centre of the cup, which may allude to the sun as Helios. This central setting was perhaps intended to receive a precious stone or a piece of amber. Following this mode of reference, the association with the bullocks might also recall the Homeric tale of the 'cattle of the sun', which were also located in Sicily.

The divine brother and sister, Helios and Selene, may perhaps have served as a model symbol for an actual human couple on the gold cup, to which the animals depicted on the rings may figuratively allude: the wolf, a wild beast, symbol of royalty and warlike power; the cow suckling the calf, an allegory of fertility and maternity. Then there is the griffin, a legendary beast symbolic of royalty, half-lion and half-eagle, and thus a winged, wild animal ready to take flight, which was often associated with distant and secluded worlds. Griffins were also considered to serve the role of protectors, specifically linked to gold reserves.

Could this therefore be a gift from a Greek *polis*, conceivably Gela, on the occasion of a marriage, perhaps between an indigenous prince and a Greek noblewoman? Or is the gold ensemble the welcoming gift for a royal couple, already married and with a child, heir to the throne? In my opinion both hypotheses are possible, and would certainly fit with the activity of establishing good relations with the indigenous communities of the area, aimed at preparing the ground for the foundation of Akragas in the

the Sicilian Far West (where the people of Sicans lived), if we may adopt an analogy with the United States of America, which was to take place in 580 BC. However, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the impetus behind the production of this extraordinary gift was competitive, with the Greeks from Selinous, founded a few decades earlier, aiming to expand their influence and to gain *Lebensraum*. Selinous was narrowly confined between the Carthaginian eparchy, the territory of the enemy Elymians, and the area of Gela's own expansion: so the gift, if from Selinous, might have been intended to put Gela's influence in check.

At this juncture, luck, or more effective diplomatic activity, appears to have favoured the people of Gela. The foundation of their sub-colony Akragas, with its confrontational political strategy, completely upset the political balance of the area, leading to the demise of Sant'Angelo Muxaro, which was probably refounded by the Akragantine tyrant Theron as a Greek-style *polis* at the beginning of the 5th century BC. The discovery of the ring with the figure of the wolf on the finger of the body in tomb VI is evidence that, even at this time, a century after they were made, these gold items retained all their significance as prestigious marks of rank.<sup>30</sup> This is emphasised by the presence of the reddish ochre-based material still preserved on the surface of the wolf, which indicates the ring's use as a seal.

#### **Appendix: Non-destructive compositional analysis of the gold rings**

***Claudia Caliri, Gioconda Lamagna, Angela Maria Manenti, Lighea Pappalardo, Hellen Cristine Santos and Francesco Paolo Romano***

The gold rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro were investigated by using optical microscopy and non-destructive X-ray analytical techniques, namely X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and micro X-ray fluorescence (micro-XRF). Measurements were performed *in situ* at the Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum in Syracuse, Italy, with the collaboration of the museum archaeologists and staff. The technical analysis of the gold alloy constituting the rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro was addressed in order to gain new insights into the nature of the gold alloy, manufacturing technology, traces of usage and state of conservation. In addition, the scientific investigation was extended to other gold objects from the excavation of the site of Sant'Angelo Muxaro. Ten samples, belonging to the collection of the Paolo Orsi museum, were selected by the archaeologists and investigated during the *in situ* campaign. The objects are summarised with provenance, description, inventory number and compositional data in **Table 1**.

#### **Analytical techniques**

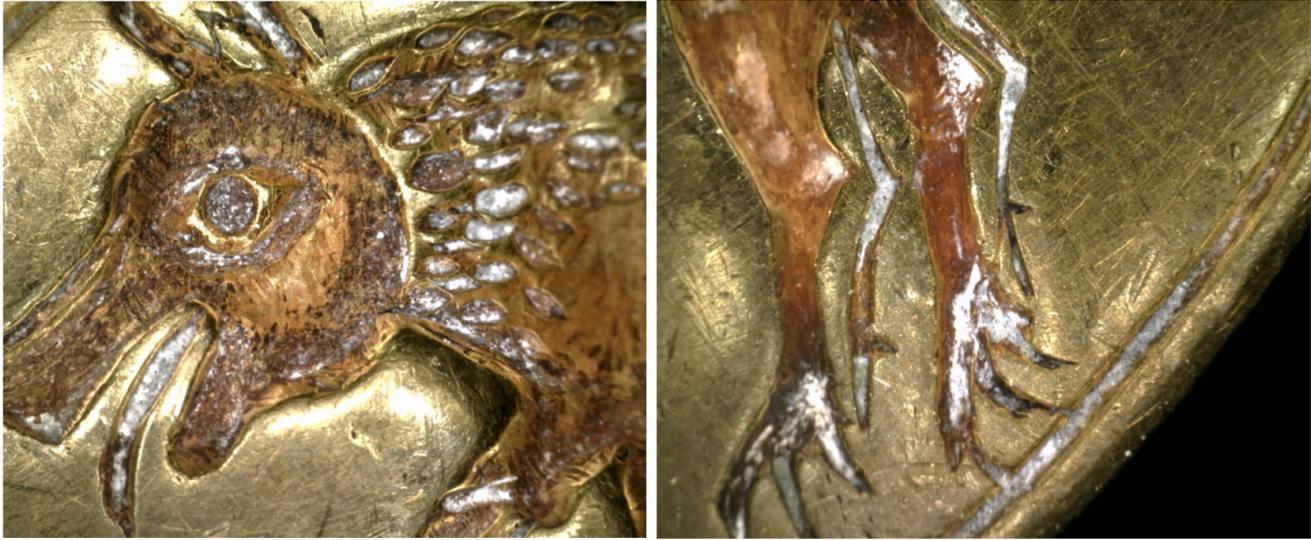
The gold objects were analysed using optical video microscopy (OM), X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and micro X-ray fluorescence (micro-XRF) developed at the LANDIS laboratory of IBAM-CNR and LNS-INFN in Catania, Italy.<sup>31</sup> These analytical techniques are non-invasive and implemented in a compact and mobile configuration. The optical video microscope was used for photographic recordings, for detecting areas where the spot XRF analysis

should be performed, and to guide the micro-XRF measurements of the gold objects in a micrometric scale of length. The microscope used in this study was a Dinolite USB equipped with a light polariser, allowing a 200× maximum magnification. Due to its non-destructive nature, X-ray fluorescence (XRF) is a well-established method applied to the investigation of artefacts of cultural significance and of archaeological materials. In the case of ancient metals, the main disadvantage of using XRF is its limited penetration depth. XRF investigation is restricted to a surface layer presenting a thickness of a few tens of microns and results can be influenced by the presence of corrosion, oxidation and segregation phenomena.<sup>32</sup> This homogenous layer can be more than 100 µm thick for the copper-based alloys, while it is less consistent (or even negligible) for precious alloys or for native precious metals (pure gold and silver). In these latter cases, surface XRF analysis is considered representative for the bulk composition as well.

The XRF instrument used in this study was a custom-built spectrometer based on a 100-watt tungsten anode X-ray tube collimated to 1mm with a molybdenum collimator. X-ray fluorescence that is induced by the primary radiation in the sample is detected with an 80mm<sup>2</sup> active area SDD detector presenting 140eV energy resolution at 5.9keV. The data for the gold samples of this work were collected for 300 seconds with the source operated at 40kV and 0.5mA. Detection limits at these experimental parameters are 100–120 µgr/gr (ppm) for heavy elements like lead (Pb), mercury (Hg), gold (Au) and bismuth (Bi), and 30–50µgr/gr (ppm) for medium atomic number elements like iron (Fe), copper (Cu), zinc (Zn) and bromine (Br) respectively. Non-destructive micro-XRF analysis assisted with optical video microscopy is particularly useful for analysing samples at a micrometric scale. Tiny details, such as natural inclusions in alloying metals, welding, metal interfaces in plated objects, etc., can be accurately investigated. In addition, a scanning capability is often associated with micro-XRF spectrometers. This allows the detection of elemental distribution maps in specific areas of the sample surface giving new insights into manufacturing technology and the state of conservation. The technical analysis of the present study was carried out by using a custom-built micro-XRF spectrometer equipped with an X-ray tube with a tungsten target coupled to a focusing X-ray optic. The focus size of the primary beam is 60 microns. X-ray spectra are detected with an 80mm<sup>2</sup> active area SDD detector with energy resolution equal to 140eV at 5.9keV. In addition, the micro-XRF spectrometer is equipped with a two-dimensional scanning system for determining the elemental distribution maps in the samples.

#### **Results and discussion**

Optical microscopy (OM) was used to gain new insights into the manufacturing technique and traces of usage, and to identify the presence of oxidation/corrosion patina. The OM results on the gold objects will be the main focus of a separate paper in preparation. In the case of the rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro, the main subject here, a reddish patina located in the engraved parts of the gold ring with the wolf (inv. 46517) required examination (**Fig. 8**). In addition,



**Figure 8** Reddish patina in the engraved surface of the gold ring (inv. 46517) from Sant'Angelo Muxaro demonstrated by optical video microscopy (OM)

OM was useful in assisting both XRF and micro-XRF in order to focus the analysis on areas of the sample that are free of contamination (spot XRF) or on small details of the objects presenting a submillimeter dimension (micro-XRF).

XRF spectra were collected locally and care was taken to focus the X-ray beam on (quasi) flat areas on the surface of the objects. A number of spot XRF measurements were performed for each of the investigated artefacts. The quantification of X-ray data was performed by using a preliminary calibration of the XRF spectrometer with reference to standard materials. Analytical data from each sample were averaged in order to minimise the local inhomogeneity eventually present in the gold alloy.

The compositional results of Au, Ag and Cu in the gold objects are summarised in **Table 1**. The error in the concentration values is 3%. Other minor elements (Ca, Fe, Pb and Sn) have been identified. They were not quantified since some of them could be attributed to contaminations deriving from the environment or from the instrument mechanics of the recent investigations.

The main alloy components of the gold rings with inventory numbers 46517 and 45905 from Sant'Angelo Muxaro are Au, Cu and Ag. The results show that the purity of the alloy is different in the two rings. In both samples,

silver content is lower than 15%. The silver concentration value is compatible with the use of a natural gold in the manufacturing process. However, ring 45905 has a gold content of about 90% with a copper content of about 7%. This high Cu concentration could indicate that copper was intentionally added during the mixing of the alloy. In contrast, the gold content of ring 46517 is 83.6%, while the copper accounts for less than 2%. The main trace elements detected in the spectra are iron (Fe) and tin (Sn). Tin, of course, could be associated with gold sourced from an alluvial deposit.<sup>33</sup> We still need a more accurate investigation in order to determine the presence of PGM (Platinum Group Metals) inclusions in the ring. This lack of information will be addressed in a forthcoming project.

The other gold samples listed in **Table 1** present a gold concentration value ranging from 82.3% to 96.7% and silver in the range 1.8%–10.3%. Copper is less than 3% in all the items with the exception of one (inv. 46519 has 3.4%). Notably all of these samples show that the gold is native in origin. Micro-XRF analysis was used to determine the constituents of the reddish patina (see **Fig. 8**) that was discovered using OM in the engraved part of the ring 46517. The main components of the patina are Cu, Fe and Au. Ti and Ca are present as minor components. The nature of the

**Table 1** The compositional XRF data on Au, Ag and Cu of the gold materials

Sample	Provenance	Description (Inventory #)	Au	Ag	Cu	Total %
Siracuse 2	S. Angelo Muxaro	Ring with a wolf (46517)	83.6	14.3	1.7	99.6
Siracuse 5	S. Angelo Muxaro	Ring with a cow (45905)	90.0	2.4	7.2	99.6
Siracuse 7	S. Angelo Muxaro	Ring (46518)	93.2	5.5	0.9	99.6
Siracuse 8	S. Angelo Muxaro	Pearl (46520)	93.7	5.1	0.2	99.0
Siracuse 21	S. Angelo Muxaro	Ring (46519)	90.3	5.4	3.4	99.1
Siracuse 17	S. Angelo Muxaro	Large strip (104474)	96.7	1.8	1	99.5
Siracuse 22	S. Angelo Muxaro	Strip (104742)	82.3	8.4	2.9	93.6
Siracuse 23	S. Angelo Muxaro	Strip (104741)	92.8	4.7	1.9	99.4
Siracuse 24	S. Angelo Muxaro	Strip (104743)	87.3	9.4	2.3	99.0
Siracuse 25	S. Angelo Muxaro	Ribbon strip (104740)	85.6	10.3	2.3	98.2

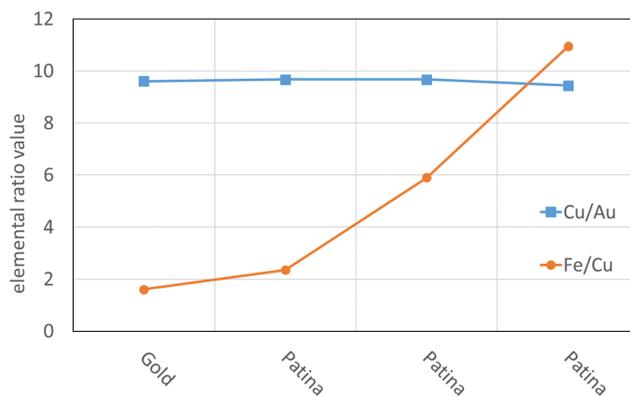
patina was revealed by investigating the enrichment of Cu and/or Fe through the use of Cu/Au and Fe/Au ratios. Micro-XRF measurements were undertaken also on the clean gold alloy of the ring in order to have a reference composition value. Experimental data were normalised to the ratio of the mass absorption coefficients of Fe and Cu K $\alpha$ -lines and of the Au-La respectively. This way the different absorption of the fluorescence radiation of Cu and Fe in the gold matrix were taken into account. Finally, the data were corrected for the different absorption of the Cu and Fe radiation due to the air path from the sample to the detector. **Figure 9** shows the plot of the Cu/Au and Fe/Au ratio in different local spots. The results demonstrate that the Cu/Au ratio is constant both in the gold matrix and in the reddish patina, while the Fe/Au ratio is strongly increased in the reddish patina. These data sets allowed us to exclude the reddish colour in the engraved part of the ring as having derived from a surface oxidation of copper or being due to other copper contamination from copper/bronze objects buried in the grave at Sant'Angelo Muxaro. Regarding the iron enrichment and the associated presence of Ti and Ca, different options are possible. The material may be a residue from the original red ochre pigment used to colour the engraved wolf. Alternatively, it could be traces of the substance used for the seal, most likely a mixture of an organic binder with a red ochre.

### Conclusion

The gold rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro were investigated *in situ* by using non-invasive analytical methods, namely optical microscopy, XRF and micro-XRF. Other gold objects from the same archaeological site were included in the investigation in order to perform some comparative studies. The results of the investigations revealed that there is a high gold content in the two engraved rings from Sant'Angelo Muxaro. However, ring 45905 presents a copper content of about 7% and so the use of a gold alloy for its production cannot be excluded. The presence of tin as a trace element suggests a secondary deposit for the gold origin. Further investigation into the presence of PGM inclusions is necessary in order to clarify these results further and to establish the source of the gold more accurately. In addition, the nature of the reddish patina inside the engraved figure of the wolf on one of the rings is now better understood. Results demonstrate that the red material is enriched with iron and associated with Ca and Ti. Finally, the compositional data of the other objects from the same site confirmed a general high level of purity in the alloy, as expected for a native gold.

### Notes

- 1 Orsi 1932; Pace 1953–4. Graphic and photographic documentation provided here are from the Archive of the 'Paolo Orsi' Regional Archaeological Museum in Syracuse. Thanks to Mario Iozzo for the photo in **Fig. 3**.
- 2 Vagnetti 1972.
- 3 An initiative made possible as part of the temporary exhibition *Tesori dalla Sicilia. Gli ori del British Museum a Siracusa*, held at the 'Paolo Orsi' Museum from 23 October to 23 November 2015 (see Lamagna and Amato 2015).



**Figure 9** Iron enrichment in the reddish patina inside the engraving of the gold ring from Sant'Angelo Muxaro. Copper presents a uniform content in the gold alloy and in the patina

- 4 Orsi 1932.
- 5 In fact, the archaeologist wrote as follows in the descriptive sheet for this piece (Inventories of the Paolo Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, volume 15, 1931): 'Presented to me by the antiques dealer Gius. Auteri of Catania; I held onto it for a few months, being very perplexed as to its origin and therefore the genuineness of the piece for which Auteri, who guaranteed it, was asking £3,000. During its long stay in the museum, the ring was examined by various local technical experts (there are some good goldsmiths and engravers in Syracuse) and by several foreign archaeologists, and their judgements were very different: good, fake, doubtful.' And again, explaining the reasons that eventually spurred him on to the transaction: 'I decided on the purchase in a state of uncertainty, which will find resolution in the next excavations at S.A.M [S. Angelo Muxaro], and, at worst, in order to eliminate a dubious piece from circulation, one for which an antiquarian and former parliamentarian of Agrigento was already offering £5,000, to dispose of it on the Rome market.'
- 6 As Orsi himself records in his notebook, no. 150 (18 July 1932): 'Until nightfall the ground was in turmoil, turned over in every direction by 6 teams of workers.'
- 7 Orsi 1932.
- 8 See Anagnostou 2004, 38, fig. 28.
- 9 E.g. in Anagnostou 2004, 42, only one of the five gold items listed by Orsi has been linked – erroneously, in fact, as we will explain later – to one of the three in Syracuse.
- 10 Thanks to Angela Maria Manenti for this information.
- 11 Currò Pisanò 1962–4, 217, n. 1.
- 12 Zanotti Bianco 1935, 346–7.
- 13 Thanks to Pietro Militello for the translation from German to Italian (now translated into English).
- 14 A confidential reference to the antiquarian Giuseppe Auteri, from whom Orsi bought the first ring (see note 5).
- 15 As has been noted thanks to recent direct observation, see Palermo, in this same paper.
- 16 Orsi 1932, 14.
- 17 Pace 1953–4; Palermo 2004; Palermo 2016a; Palermo 2016b; De Miro 2016; Vagnetti 1972.
- 18 Palermo 2004; Rizza 1979.
- 19 Cf. Weisstein, E.W. 'Vesica Piscis', from *MathWorld – A Wolfram Web Resource*, <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/VesicaPiscis.html>.
- 20 Barnett 1974.
- 21 Markoe 1985, Cy1, 169–70, 242–3.
- 22 Sakellarakis 1992, 114, figs 8b–c, 9.

- 23 Markoe 1985.  
 24 Barnett 1974.  
 25 See Rizza 1979.  
 26 Palermo 2004.  
 27 Ibid.  
 28 De Miro 1999.  
 29 De Miro 2017.  
 30 Orsi 1932; Palermo 2004.  
 31 Romano *et al.* 2005.  
 32 Romano *et al.* 2012.  
 33 Guerra and Calligaro 2004.

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# Chapter 6

## Cultural Connections between East and West: The Sculpture of Selinous and its Surroundings

Caterina Greco  
Director, Museo archeologico  
regionale 'Antonino Salinas'

Selinous offers one of the richest, most original and heterogeneous ensembles of sculptural works that bear witness to Greek civilisation, art and culture, not only in Sicily, but also in the Mediterranean as a whole. Most of the sculptures that might have formed part of the other Siceliot cities such as Syracuse and Agrigento have been lost. A major factor for the survival rate of sculpture from ancient Selinous was determined by historical fluctuations experienced by this Megarian colony. For example the Hellenistic-Punic city saw extensive reuse of stone material from earlier monuments, and there were long periods of abandonment after the Roman conquest. Furthermore, the actual location of the 'colony', which Johann Wolfgang von Goethe even described as having been 'methodically devastated', was only rediscovered at a late date.<sup>1</sup> All of these circumstances favoured the preservation of the ruins, the temple architecture and their decoration.

What makes the sculpture of Selinous so paradigmatic, however, is that it offers the most complete and classic image of Sicilian sculptural production providing an early and largely uninterrupted chronological sequence running from about the mid-6th century BC and spanning the entire arc of the city's life until its destruction in 409 BC. It is possible to confirm a coherent relationship between an individual monument and the decorative phase that gives its frame of reference – that is to say, between the religious rites, communication strategies and political status of the *polis*. This has been masterfully reconstructed for the architectural sculptures of so-called temples C, F and E by Clemente Marconi.<sup>2</sup>

The earliest known architectural sculptures from Selinous are the 'Small Metopes', subdivided into two groups, that can probably be linked to two different earlier buildings preceding temple C and that also stood on the acropolis. They provide the oldest evidence to come from this site and their date has been pinned down to the decade 550–540 BC. From this point onwards, the temple sculptures of Selinous show both complete expressive maturity and full understanding of the contemporary iconographic vocabulary of the main centres of artistic production in the Greek world. Yet, at the same time, the sculptures already reveal an autonomous style, capable of introducing elements of novelty both in the choice of themes and in their particular interpretation of them, giving a distinctive account of the civic community's strong sense of identity. There is a peculiar and enigmatic metope with a sphinx with an unusually dynamic pose, which cannot readily be interpreted as part of the more common heraldic couple serving an apotropaic function (i.e. that of averting evil) as shown on the well-known relief in Monte S. Mauro di Caltagirone, which is slightly earlier in date, around 570–560 BC.<sup>3</sup> More canonical is the metope representing the Rape of Europa, an original version of the myth embodying the most profound and expressive sense of the phenomenon of 'colonisation'. Dragged from east to west, according to the many ancient literary traditions incorporating the journey of the young girl abducted by Zeus from the Phoenician coast and carried off to Crete, the Europa shown in this metope is composed as if compliant with her fate, on the back of the bull. She holds onto the beast by grasping one of his horns as

she travels over a sea whose depth is emphasised by the size of the fish. The scene of the abduction of Europa was a very popular subject around the middle of the 6th century BC, although it has only one precedent in architectural sculpture in the form of a metope dating from about 560 BC, discovered in the foundations of the later treasury of the Sikyonians in Delphi.<sup>4</sup> The unusual feature of the composition of the Selinous metope is not so much the placid submissiveness of the young girl, but the contrasting agitated and tumultuous movement of the bull, who literally swims into the waves of the sea rather than cutting through them, as it normally does in representations of the event, as for example on a Laconian cup found on Samos dating from about 560 BC, or running on the ground.<sup>5</sup> In any case the powerfully symbolic meaning of this Europa is clear, evoking the epic feat of the sea-crossings achieved by the first small groups of Megarian colonists, who over the course of the 7th century BC travelled all the way from the Greek continent to the eastern end of the Aegean on the banks of the Bosphorus, where in about the middle of the century they had founded Byzantion, while almost simultaneously heading towards the extreme western frontier, where they settled in Megara Hyblaia and then Selinous in that south-western corner of Sicily where the Mediterranean might also be considered a Phoenician and Etruscan sea.<sup>6</sup>

The 'Small Metopes' offer a brief decalogue of the founding myths of the colony. In other periods this also drew upon imagery reflected in the decoration of the major Selinous urban shrines, referencing a roll call of local cults known to us through the later Selinous inscription found in temple G.<sup>7</sup> In addition to Zeus and Apollo, Phobos, Athena, Malophoros, Pasikrateia, Herakles and Poseidon are the main deities of the Selinous pantheon. This shows the marked influence of Megarian and Doric-Peloponnesian traditions, enhanced by Spartan elements with the cult of Phobos and of the Tindaridae. These cults and images make reference to the sequences of events surrounding the ancestry of the *Atreidai*, as illustrated later in the themes depicted on the architectural decoration of temple C, with the metope of Orestes killing Klytemnestra, and in other manifestations of the chthonian (underworld) cults of Selinous, such as the merging of Iphigenia and Hekate on a white-ground *lektyhos* found by Ettore Gabrici in the shrine of Demeter Malophoros.<sup>8</sup>

Another metope from the early, small series shows three goddesses and refers to the Megarian deity par excellence Demeter, who had temples on the *acropoli* of Karia and Alkathoos in Megara, and who was worshipped by the name of Malophoros at a sanctuary at the port of Nisaia.<sup>9</sup> This metope shows Demeter and Persephone meeting Hekate, holding what are either torches or ears of corn, their customary attributes, which were probably easier to identify when their details were originally completed in paint. These attributes appeared in a variety of types in art. The ears of corn could vary in form, with their stalks varying in length and the thickness of the ear, while the torches could come in different lengths and shaft thicknesses.<sup>10</sup> Closely connected to the myth of Demeter, the goddess responsible for the dispensing of laws and above all of agricultural fertility, around which the economic centre of the *polis* depended, is

the abduction of her daughter Persephone. This is shown on a stone relief from the *propylaia* of the shrine of Malophoros dated to around 500 BC and reused in a later building from about 420–400 BC.<sup>11</sup> The relief is an early example, in fact the first ever in sculpture, of a theme that was very widespread on painted pottery and a prototype for later images of a type sometimes referred to as the 'lovers of the gods' so often seen in sculpture from Selinous. There is, for example, a beautiful terracotta *arula* showing Eos chasing Kephalos, also from the Malophoros shrine, and it further occurs on the stone metopes from temple E.

Equally popular at Selinous is the representation of deities on a *quadriga* (four-horse chariot), a subject manifested in the 'small Metopes' with an example discovered by Vincenzo Tusa in 1968, and which recurs twice more in the eastern Doric frieze of temple C. The second of the two *quadrigai* in temple C (metope East VI) shows, according to the most accepted reading to date, Apollo between his sister Artemis and mother Leto, a group of deities thought to refer back to that of the 'Delian Triad' known from a small metope from Selinous published in 1924 by Gabrici.<sup>12</sup> As recorded in the great victory inscription of temple G, the names of Apollo, Poseidon and Herakles recur among the deities, the date of which ranges from the second quarter to the middle of the 5th century BC. The city thus experimented with a model of self-representation that stamped it with a seal of superiority, by superimposing myth with contemporary historical reality. This was further evident on the metopes from temple F showing the cycle of the gigantomachy theme, of around 500–490/80 BC, and on the pediment of the *Olympieion* at Selinous. Surviving from temple F is the upper half of a figure of a dying giant. This was carved during the turbulent decades of the beginning of the century, contemporary with the Persian wars and with the first great Greek-Carthaginian clash in the west, in which Selinous played an ambiguous and ultimately a politically calamitous role: 'l'identificazione della città degli uomini con quella degli dei, su cui si plasma l'immagine del nemico come Gigante'.<sup>13</sup> There was a phase of renewed political dynamism following the overthrow of the tyrannical regimes, and this saw the construction of the third temple dedicated to Hera on Selinous's eastern hill with its magnificent series of metopes. These celebrate the renewed equilibrium achieved by the city in the 450s BC by using a consistent representational language based on the myths recounting the victorious supremacy of the *kosmos* of the Olympian gods over *chaos*, in a story that begins by showing the association and opposition of *dike* and *hubris*. We have metopes portraying Athena striking down the giant Enkelados, the insolent arrogance of Aktaion, punished by Artemis who has him torn to pieces by his own dogs, and Herakles who defeats the Amazon Hippolyte. All this occurs under the gaze of the divine couples on the other metopes, who symbolise the primordial value of marriage as an essential founding element of the community. These have been restored as showing Poseidon and Amphitrite, Peleus and Thetis, and above all the *hierogamy* of Zeus and Hera, that is, the sublimation of the leadership of a civic- or citizen-based social system in which the protection of the institution of marriage and family is a guarantee of the legitimacy of

offspring and the rights of citizenship. The metopes, then, are an analogy of the political and ideological manifesto of the polis, with the iconography aiming to remind citizens of a moral code of behaviour.<sup>14</sup>

Pre-dating by only a few decades the city's devastation by the Carthaginians, the sculptures of temple E represent the last and greatest manifestation of Selinuntine artistic production, which, although it ran its brief course over only two centuries, nevertheless retained its own consistent identity in a geopolitical context as politically complex and ethnically composite as that of western Sicily.

In reference to this last point, and as part of the 'surroundings' referred to in the title of this paper, it is appropriate at this point to turn to what, in my opinion, should be considered one of the most exemplary works of western Greek sculpture and particularly that of Selinuntine production, namely the statue of the so-called Motya Youth in the Museo Giuseppe Whitaker di Mozia (**Figs 1–2**). I proposed a new interpretation, at a seminar held in Malibu in April 2013 on the occasion of an exhibition organised by the Getty Museum in collaboration with the Region of Sicily.<sup>15</sup> The fact that the statue is well known and that there is already a vast bibliography on the subject excuses us from reviewing the long list of identifications proposed over the years. A few of the most recent interpretations are worth remembering, however. Olga Palagià identified the statue as a soothsayer and part of a group dedicated by Gelon of Syracuse to commemorate the victory of Himera in 480 BC. John Papadopoulos opted for a priest-dancer of Apollo Karneios, and Clemente Marconi preferred to see the figure as a Greek *auriga* (charioteer), commissioned by a Greek resident of the island of Motya. It is this latter identification that is most prevalent among the various opinions, and that the statue was set up by a victorious *auriga*, possibly Thrasyboulos, son of the tyrant Xenokrates of Agrigento, who was a winner at Delphi in 490 BC. Moreover, Malcolm Bell suggested that the sculpture might be attributed to the famous sculptor Kalamis.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the vast publication output supporting the 'athletic' interpretation of the statue, identifying the subject as a charioteer is not without significant contradictions and nor is it completely conclusive. Features against it include the costume: a *chiton* of light and finely pleated material envelops the figure, revealing every minute anatomical detail, and a high 'belt' encircles the torso just under the armpits. Neither of these costume details corresponds to the classic image of an *auriga's* apparel. This usually consisted of a *xystis*, white or yellow in colour, held tight at the waist by a belt with crossed straps on the chest or back. But above all, the most significant fact in terms of iconography is that it is very difficult to reconcile the bold and confident attitude and the virile physicality of the figure, accentuated by the transparency of his garment, with the usual image of a charioteer. The ambiguous sensuality and yet powerful virility would not have been appropriate for such an athletic character. These stylistic and physical traits would surely have been regarded by contemporaries as befitting an actual personality rather than a generic type.

It is therefore more plausible to look for a name for the protagonist of the Motya statue in the heroic sphere, and the

characteristics noted above are reminiscent of Pelops in Pindar's *First Olympian Ode*, the young man of blinding beauty who made first Poseidon and then Hippodameia, daughter of Oinomaos, King of Pisa, fall in love with him.<sup>17</sup> As attested by the cult of Pelops at Olympia, dating from the same years as Pindar's celebratory poem, this legendary character is identified as that of the Greek hero par excellence. The myth in fact combines death and resurrection, love and deception, horrendous misdeeds and expiation, the conquest of a kingdom and the foundation of a doomed lineage. Pelops also represented both the exaltation of athletic virtue and a bloody and rapacious conflict between generations of the same family, all of which were blended in a crucible, melted and merged into the mystery of the east with the tradition of the Greek continent, creating the first seed of a national epic shared by all of Greek descent. Having arrived in Greece either from Phrygia or Lydia, Pelops gave his name to an entire Hellenic region earning him, as a foreigner, even if one of princely rank, the role of founder of the principal royal ancestries, including the famous and tragic lineage of the *Atreidai*, and ancestor of Herakles, in turn a Dorian hero closely linked with colonisation and founder of the Olympic Games. At the very beginning of Pelops's adventure-filled story comes his own early death, followed by his sudden resurrection after the banquet at which he himself had been offered to the gods as a meal by his father Tantalos. Pelops is then abducted by a lovesick Poseidon, a blatant *topos*, or motif, of aristocratic pederastic love, anticipating Zeus's love of Ganymede. This was a significant triangulation of legendary characters, mystery-cult beliefs and propitiatory rituals, centred on the shrine of Olympian Zeus and the ritual worship offered up during athletic competitions. The noblest and most important of these contests was held in memory of the challenge against Oinomaos, and became the race of the four-horse chariots or *quadrigai*.<sup>18</sup> And it was immediately upon her arrival in Greece that Hippodameia, 'seeing his beauty', fell instantly in love with him.<sup>19</sup> Pelops's victory in the chariot race symbolically represents a veritable 'rebirth', his second in fact, into a new dimension of royalty and into a new world. Pelops is thus the founding father of Greekness itself, and of a hybrid culture generated through the fecund and enriching contribution of the Anatolian, dark and fabulous east. It is not surprising, therefore, to note how much the image of Pelops was able to take hold in the western colonies, thanks to the original and primordial connotation of Pelops as an *oikist*. His journey from east to west echoed that of actual Greek travellers and settlers.

An early representation of the story of Pelops was enshrined in the east pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, which embodied the figure of the hero as an image of pure competition, in the form of an aristocratic warrior. But there were other types of image used to represent the hero. Firstly, two black-figure *lekythoi* from the Sappho Painter, dated 500–490 BC, depict Pelops racing, mounted on a chariot pulled by winged horses. On both of them the hero is shown wearing long robes, a sign of the character's princely status, and with an eastern-style headdress.<sup>20</sup> The hero's Anatolian origin is even more evident in later representations, from the 4th century BC, such as on the



Figure 1 Motya Youth (Museo Giuseppe Whitaker di Mozia), on display at the British Museum in 2012

Athenian red-figured *krater* of the Oinomaos Painter, in a *lekythos* by the Ixion Painter, dating from 330–310 BC, and on a *krater* from Ruvo di Puglia, now lost.<sup>21</sup> But in the scenes that illustrate the sacrifices and other preparations for the contest, we see the same moment that stands ‘frozen’ at the centre of the Olympia pediment. On an Athenian amphora in the British Museum attributed to the ‘Varrese’ Painter, from the first half of the 4th century (**Fig. 3**), Pelops is shown standing, leaning on a spear held in his left hand and with his right hand on his hip.<sup>22</sup> The hero appears again holding one or two spears on an Apulian *hydria* in the Tchacos collection, and on another in Naples known from a drawing by Pappasliotis, with the posture in reverse with the conjectured reconstruction of the statue from Motya.<sup>23</sup>

Even the remnants of the original polychrome, the significance of which have been largely and inexplicably undervalued by other scholars, tend to support an heroic identity for the Motya statue. Remains of blue pigment survive under the back of the head, reported by Gioacchino Falsone at the time of the excavation and found on the nape of the neck thanks to painstaking analytical work conducted in the laboratories of the Getty Museum by Jerry Podany. These undoubtedly belong to the ringlets of the man’s curly hair.<sup>24</sup> Blue was a colour used in representations of beings of a chthonic nature, so appropriate for Pelops and his relationship with the underworld, as shown in numerous examples and ultimately in the beautiful terracotta head of Hades from Morgantina (see the paper by Maria Lucia Ferruzza in this volume). This colour can in no way be considered appropriate for the identification of this figure as an athlete.<sup>25</sup> The presence of traces of a purple-red colour on

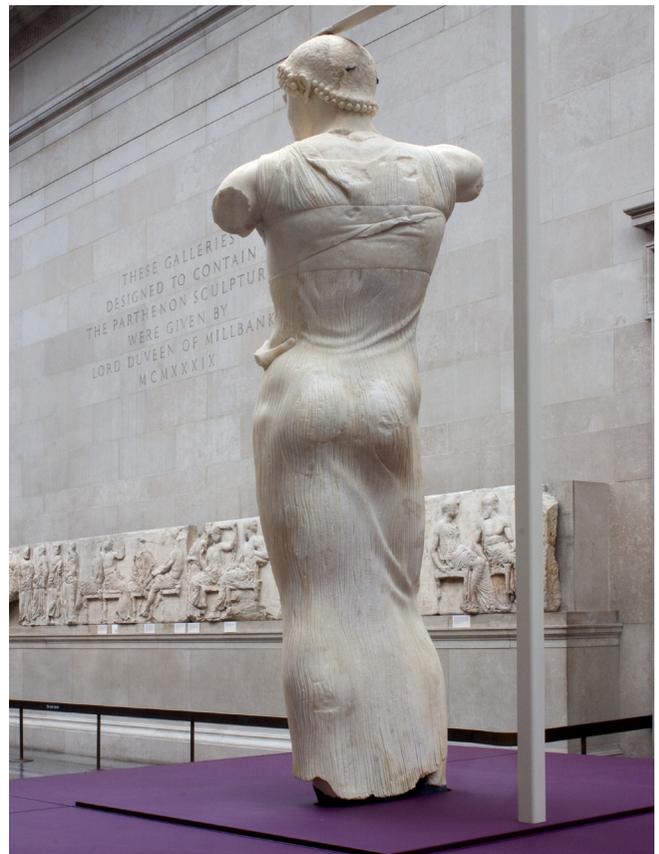


Figure 2 Rear view of the Motya Youth (Museo Giuseppe Whitaker di Mozia), on display at the British Museum in 2012

the back, also documented during the excavation, indicates that the thin and transparent *xystis* was painted this colour, and it may possibly have represented a *sarapis*, a sumptuous, purple royal costume typically worn by Persian sovereigns and used in Greece by kings and tyrants.<sup>26</sup> We must therefore imagine that with the strong contrast of these colours the glaring whiteness of the statue's naked flesh would have stood out all the more. We note the shoulders and arms in which all the physical strength of the young man are concentrated and on which the sculptor has lingered, delineating veins and tendons almost as if seeking to render the palpable sensation of living flesh and twitching muscles beneath the skin. And it is hard to escape the suggestion that the white of the marble was used to indicate what Pindar described as the 'radiant and dazzling shoulder endowed with ivory' of the young Pelops kidnapped by an enamoured Poseidon. In just the same way, Hippodameia is immediately smitten with him. In Sophokles's tragedy *Oenomaus* she eulogises about the 'beauty', the 'piercing gaze' and the fascination radiated by the young Phrygian prince to justify the act of parricide.

Finally, we come to the girdle or corset, which Sandro Stucchi identified as a support made of leather, probably correctly in my opinion. Straps or *strophion* made of light cloth, wound around the chest over and over again, were used by women to support or, alternatively, to bind and compress the breasts, but in some representations bandages and medical support strips are associated with male characters, such as those of the Heraklidai legendary dynasty shown on a vase now in Munich.<sup>27</sup> The *Corpus Hippocraticum*, however, describes the tools and methods used for orthopaedic purposes in the ancient Greek world, including a soft, flexible Carthaginian leather employed to recompose fractures to the small bones of the head and face (Vol. III, Book XXXIII, line 10) and a stiffer and more substantial leather, used for healing fractures of the lower joints (Vol. III, Book XXX, line 27).<sup>28</sup> The high band worn by the Motya Youth, supporting but still elastic, could therefore have represented a real orthopaedic garment in leather, soft enough to be wrapped several times around the breastbone and perhaps necessary for a character endowed by the gods with an artificial shoulder in precious material such as ivory. This image of 'Pelops' should then be restored with his right arm extended and bent upwards, leaning on a lance while resting his left hand on his hip. The figure is best seen from a three-quarter viewpoint because then the face is frontal and the brand new left shoulder is offered to the viewer. This pose reminds us of Ovid's description in Book VI of the *Metamorphoses*, verses 406–11: '... the only one to shed tears also for her (Niobe) was Pelops, of whom it is said that he tore the clothes from his breast, showing the ivory of his left shoulder.' We must also imagine that this figure wore a Phrygian cap, with the usual conical fabric rising to a pointed tip from which strips of leather divided, falling free and fluttering about the shoulder blades and cheeks as documented by figures on Athenian and Italic pottery. In keeping with the great value and high quality of the sculpture it may be assumed that this headpiece was made of bronze or another precious material, and the pins on the rough marble surface of the skull were probably used to fix the metal cap in



Figure 3 Detail of amphora, attributed to the 'Varrese' Painter, 4th century BC. British Museum, 1843,0724.2

position. Two pins are placed just above the curls on the nape of the neck and one at the apex of the head, possibly showing where a vertical support was raised, perhaps to anchor the heavy and pendulous tip of the cap from the inside.

But how are Pelops and the city of Selinous related? What links this legendary hero with the Sicilian city? Firstly, the style of the Motya statue, and in particular certain details of the face and the treatment of the folds of the garment, shows great affinity with sculptures produced and discovered in ancient Selinous.<sup>29</sup> In terms of religion and cult, Pelops was certainly part of the heroic pantheon of the city, for one of Hippodameia's sons was that same Alkathoos who became king of Megara Nisaia, back on the Greek mainland, replicating his father's good fortune thanks to his marriage to Euaichme, daughter of Megareus. Among the gods worshipped in the city of Selinous, we can mention Poseidon, Pelops patron and his tutelary deity, and Herakles. The entire celebrative system of the self-representation of the city is connected to specific mythological genealogies, visually expressed in the architectural sculpture of temples C, E and F. There is a link between the different sculptural themes, which is the tragic deeds of the *Atreidai*.<sup>30</sup> With this in mind the character of Pelops has a trail-blazing role, as he is an important connection between the main deities worshipped in the city and those represented in the sculpture and the heroic legend. Finally, there is a direct relationship between the city of Selinous and the sanctuary at Olympia from the late 6th to the early decades of the 5th centuries BC, not least through the dedication of the treasury described by Pausanias, Book 6.19.10, inside which there was a chryselephantine statue of Dionysos. The chronology of this prominent offering in the principal Panhellenic sanctuary, alongside treasuries financed by other cities in Greek Sicily, coincided with a period of political significance

for Selinous and with the rise of the cult and image of Pelops as a national hero at Olympia. At the same time, Pelops was the protagonist of Pindar's 'Siceliot' verses and then later, as we have noted, a central figure in the architectural decoration of the primary façade of the temple of Zeus. Despite the style of the Motya Youth revealing characteristics that blend an intense local identity with strong Ionian influence, it has been frequently compared with the statue of Pelops from the Olympia pediment, and not without valid reasons. Marconi recognised that both the statues from Olympia and the sculptures from Selinous share distinctive features that suggest the hands of itinerant sculptors, probably of Cycladic or Attic-Cycladic origin, perhaps from the island of Paros. These sculptors also brought to life the gigantomachy cycle in the metopes from temple F, the theme of which was a potent and celebratory expression of tyrannical power.<sup>31</sup>

It seems likely that the Motya statue was executed in the years immediately preceding the battle of Himera, a city that incidentally issued coins bearing the image of the hero Pelops, when the sculptors of temple F at Selinous might still have been active, rather than dating the statue to the years after Gelon's victory in 480 BC.<sup>32</sup> For the alliance that is thought to have created a short-lived federation of Carthage, Selinous and Segesta against the convergent expansionist aims of the Emmenidai and the Dinomenidai, a statue of Pelops would have served as a powerful vehicle for propaganda: of Phrygian origin, our hero was a victorious 'barbarian' who nonetheless united the Anatolian east with the Hellenic motherland. But, in conclusion, I believe this powerful image, combining mythological and political symbolism, was stolen by the Carthaginians during the sacking and conquest of Selinus in 409 BC. It was most likely torn down from its original context at Selinous, the feet and base broken away and left behind, and the main part of the statue carried off to Mozia as the spoils of war.<sup>33</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Goethe 1993, 321.
- 2 Marconi 1994a; Marconi 1995; Marconi 2007; Marconi 2009b.
- 3 Marconi 2007, 125, fig. 60.
- 4 Marconi 2007, 93, fig. 38.
- 5 Marconi 2007, 90–6; 225–6. For the cup from Samos, Archaeological Museum, K 3848, Zahn 1983, 108, no. 13.
- 6 For the Megarean colonial foundations in the Mediterranean, see Berard 1963, 117–22, 238–41; Antonetti 1997; Cordano 2012.
- 7 For the inscription found in temple G see Antonetti 2006.
- 8 For the temple C metope depicting the killing of Klytemnestra, see Marconi 2007, 161–8. For the *lekkythos* of Douris showing the sacrifice of Iphigenia, see Marconi 1994b.
- 9 Pausanias Book I, 39–44. Bohringer 1980.
- 10 Tusa 1969, 155–62; Beschi 1988, 864: I favour the traditional identification of the scene, with the Thesmophorian triad of Demeter, Persephone and Hekate, rather than the one with Persephone and the Oceanides proposed by Marconi 2007, 96–9.
- 11 Gabrici 1927, 169–72; Marconi 2009a. For the *arula* with Eos and Kephalos, see Gabrici 1927, 195–6, pl. XXXVI.
- 12 Marconi 2007, 101, fig. 43, 227–8.
- 13 Marconi 1994a, 297. For the fragmentary figure of a giant from temple G, see Adornato 2016.
- 14 Marconi 1994a. In the same volume, on this subject see the preface by Salvatore Settis, 'Oralità e figura', 7–18.
- 15 The seminar *Rethinking the Motya Youth* took place at the Getty Villa in Malibu on 27 April 2013, as part of the educational activities based around the exhibition *Sicily. Art and Invention*, organised by the Getty Museum and the Region of Sicily. In addition to the current author ('A proposed new reading of the statue of Motya'), Clemente Marconi ('The Motya charioteer: a revision') and John Papadopoulos ('The Motya Youth: Apollo Karneios, art and tyranny in the Greek West') also took part in the discussion on the Motya statue, which was introduced by Claire Lyons. Andrew Stewart summed up the theories. Some of these contributions have already been published elsewhere (Marconi 2014, Papadopoulos 2014), while on my part there is a detailed study on the subject currently underway.
- 16 In addition to those just mentioned by Marconi and Papadopoulos, among the most recent contributions see also Palagià 2011. The most important critical commentaries on the Motya statue include La Rocca 1985; Falsone 1987; Tusa 1988; Di Vita 1988; Dontas 1988; Stucchi 1988; La Lomia 1989; Bell 1995; Pavese 1996; Stampolidis 2004; Greco 2009, 533–7 (with an extensive bibliographical account and a reading that at that point favoured the 'athletic' interpretation of the subject). For the history of the discovery and excavation data, see Falsone 1988.
- 17 Pindar. Olympian I, 25–28: 'as out of the pure cauldron Clotho brought him, radiant and dazzling, endowed with a shoulder of ivory' (Gentili *et al.* 2013, 15–17, 31). In contrast with the much more grim and gory story according to which Pelops's father Tantalos supposedly cut his son into pieces and prepared a feast of his flesh at a banquet of the gods, the most significant new element in the alternative version of the myth narrated by Pindar is the role of Poseidon, who falls in love with and kidnaps the boy and then provides the winged horses with which he goes on to race against and beat Oinomaos. For the legend of Pelops, whose greatest sculptural celebration is in the form of the eastern pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, see Lacroix 1976; Nagy 1986; Slater 1989; Howie 1991; Valavanis 2006; Dolcetti 2011.
- 18 Barringer 2005, esp. 216–32. Ekroth 2012.
- 19 Soph. *Oenomaos*, fr. 474; Howie 1991, 92.
- 20 Shapiro 1994, 80, figs 52–4; Barringer 2005, 222–3, figs 11–12.
- 21 Howie 1991, 64, fig. 1 (*lekkythos* by the Ixion Painter); 65, fig. 3 (Attic *krater* by the Oinomaos Painter); 95–6, 109, fig. 16 (*krater*, now lost, from Ruvo di Puglia).
- 22 Attic amphora, Varrese Painter: Shapiro 1994, 82, fig. 56.
- 23 Tchacos *hydria*: Trendall 1985, 136, fig. 10. Papanliotis Apulian amphora: Howie 1991, 110, fig. 18.
- 24 Falsone 1988, 27.
- 25 Drew Griffith 2005; cf. Sassi 2004. For the Morgantina Hades, see the paper by Ferruzza in this volume.
- 26 For this type of garment, analogous to the *sareton* mentioned in a fragment of Sophokles's *Andromeda* (fr.135 Radt) and which the lexicographer Hesychios defines as *Persikos chiton mesoleukos* (a very luxurious costume, purple in colour, adorned with a white band and used by both Greek and Oriental male royal figures), see Roscino 2006, 43 and n. 64.
- 27 Hafner 1995, 62–3, pl. XIII, 1 and 4.
- 28 López Salvà 1999, 308–10.
- 29 For the head and the hairstyle, see the Heracles in the metope of temple E (Marconi 1994, 217–19); for the distinctive style of execution of the costume, cf. Greco 2009, 536, fig. 285.

- 30 Marconi 1994a, 307 ff.  
 31 Marconi 1994a, 290–8, 303–13. Marconi 2009b, 261–4.  
 32 Torelli 2003, 678–9.  
 33 If this is the case then the feet and base of the statue are unlikely to be found at Motya.

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# Chapter 7

## The Warrior of Agrigento: A History of Scholarship and Conservation

Donatella Mangione  
Funzionario Direttivo archeologo,  
Museo archeologico 'Pietro Griffo',  
Agrigento

Lorella Pellegrino  
Funzionario Direttivo Restauratore,  
Centro Regionale di Progettazione e  
Restauro, Palermo

Tommaso Guagliardo  
Responsabile U. O. Beni Architettonici  
e Storico-artistici, Soprintendenza ai  
Beni Culturali, Agrigento

### Introduction

The subject of this paper is the marble statue known as the 'warrior', a famous highlight of the 'Pietro Griffo' Regional Archaeological Museum in Agrigento. The sculpture was assembled in 1970 from the fragments, its reconstruction being interpreted by scholars who over the years have proposed several different hypotheses surrounding its pose and posture. The exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest* held in 2016 at the British Museum in London, in which the sculpture was exhibited, offered an opportunity for its conservation, which was vital to render it safe for transport. In the course of this activity, it was possible to analyse the work that had been previously undertaken by others and to reflect on various issues concerning any reassembly of the statue.

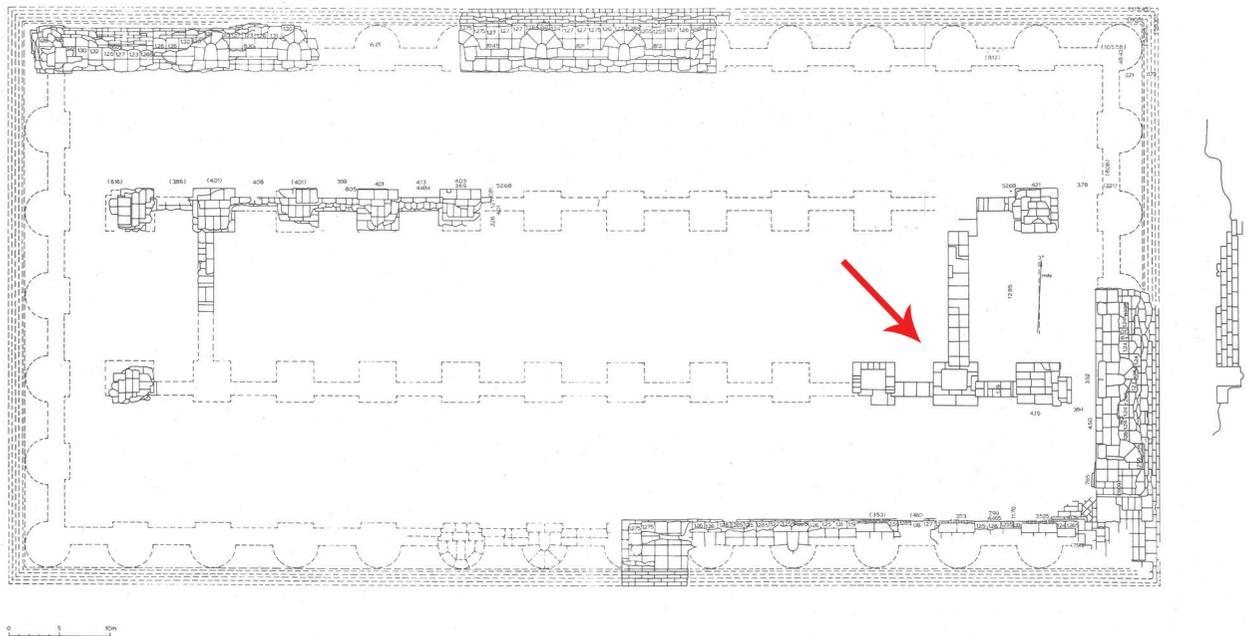
### History of the discovery and subsequent studies

The three fragments that make up the statue of the warrior were found at different times and in different places, although consistently in the area lying between temples B and A, dedicated to Zeus and Herakles respectively. The torso (inv. AG 217) was found in 1940 by Goffredo Ricci, the then Superintendent of Agrigento, in the area of the pronaos of the temple of Zeus (**Fig. 1**), in a spot '... where four columns were uncovered, and where the base of a kind of quadrangular tower was found, encompassed between two columns, and connected by a transverse wall...'. The tower was found to have walls covered in stucco: '... it was found full of river sand... and fragments of large vases'. Ricci published the news of the discovery with these few words, but he never revisited the subject of the sculpture for a systematic and extensive scholarly study.<sup>1</sup>

The leg fragment (inv. AG 2557) was found in 1958 in cistern number two, excavated to the south of the temple of Zeus, while the head (inv. AG 6077) was discovered at the bottom of a well dug to the north of the temple of Herakles. Ernesto De Miro, who was in charge of the excavation, emphasised how many finds dating from the 6th century through to around 450 BC came to light in the well itself.

Four other marble fragments were unearthed in the same area and De Miro reported them as probably belonging to the statue of the warrior. They are a left hand holding the strap of a shield (inv. AG 2186) found in 1958 in a large basin to the south of the temple of Zeus; part of a female arm with drapery; a fragment found together with the thigh, possibly belonging to the armband of a shield (inv. AG 2515) decorated with a three-lobed palmette; and the wrist and palm of a right hand (inv. AG 2586) (**Fig. 2**).

Of these four fragments, only the first has always been thought to belong to the main statue, while the draped arm was obviously excluded as the warrior is naked. The fragments interpreted as the armband of a shield and the hand were also excluded because they are larger in proportion than the warrior. Very recent mineral-petrographic and isotopic analyses have definitively established that the fragment with a hand holding a shield strap does indeed belong to the torso of the warrior. The investigations, conducted by Professor Lorenzo Lazzarini, have also made it possible to identify the provenance of the marble from which the statue was carved. It appears to have been quarried at Lakkoi on the island of Paros.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 1** Floor plan of the temple of Zeus (De Waele 1980, pl. 6). The arrow shows where the torso was discovered

The main three fragments of the statue remained separated from one another for a long time, although there was a strong suspicion that at least some of them had to be part of the same sculpture. It was Ernesto De Miro who initiated their study, first making plaster casts of the three pieces and only later attempting to work on reassembling the originals. This was completed with some additional inserts, as he himself was at pains to point out: ‘... the head ... has no points of attachment to the trunk’ and an insert was therefore necessary, whereas ‘the thigh ... adheres perfectly to the torso at the front; only at the back does it remain separated from it by a narrow gap ...’<sup>3</sup>

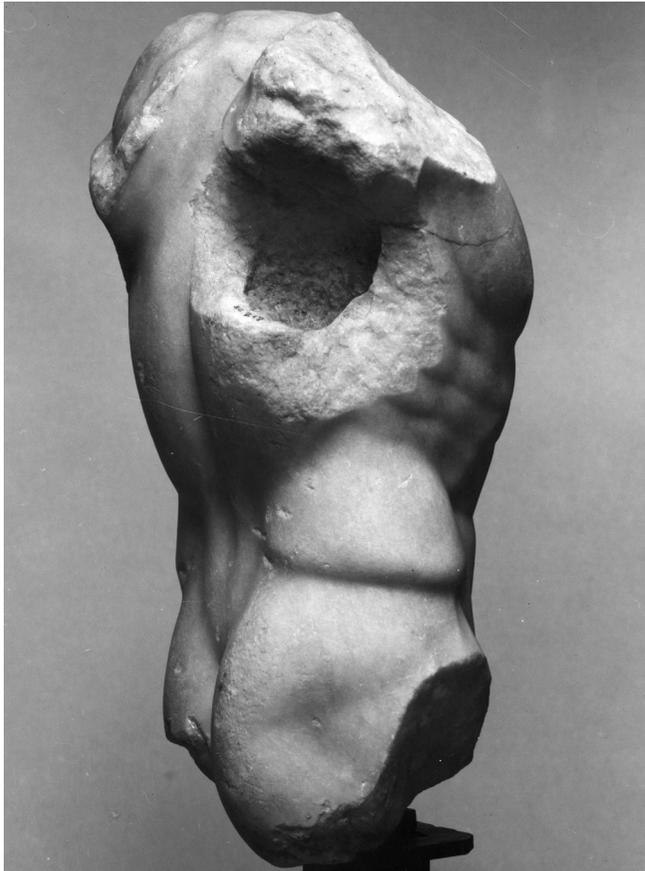
During the course of examining the statue, De Miro considered two questions: the statue’s posture and its original location. From a careful analysis of the arrangement of the muscles and the swelling of the veins, De Miro suggested that the figure should be restored with the left leg bent, kneeling on the ground with the right leg extended out to the side. The right arm was raised and bent back behind the neck, with a weapon in that fist, while the left hand held the shield with which the warrior protected himself. Of this part only the hand survives, holding the grip of the shield. According to De Miro, this sculpture would have been part of a pedimental group from a building, suggested by the cavity cut into the marble in the region of the right shoulder blade (**Fig. 3**). This would have been hollowed out for the insertion of a support to anchor the statue to the tympanum wall. It also appears to be confirmed by the presence of other fragments of similar marble sculptures found in the same area, suggesting the existence of other figures that would have formed the pedimental group.

De Miro identified the figure as Kyknos fighting against Herakles, and has indicated that its probable original location was on the pediment of temple A, which was dedicated to that same divinity. He suggested that Pythagoras of Rhegion was the sculptor (**Fig. 4**).

In his description of the temple of Zeus, Diodorus mentions a gigantomachy decorating its eastern tympanum,<sup>4</sup> but De Miro excludes the possibility that this statue could belong to the temple of Zeus because the head was discovered in connection with other finds from the archaic period prior to the construction of that temple, which can be dated to the period immediately following the victory at Himera in 480 BC. Moreover, the scale of the statue is not in proportion with the enormous pediment of the temple. Ursula Knigge, studying only the torso, also considered this figure as belonging to a group, but she sees it as part of a freestanding or votive group placed inside the temple of Zeus, depicting Enkelados and Athena to whom she assigns the fragment with drapery.<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 2** (top row) Left hand with shield strap and draped arm; (bottom row) armband of shield and right hand, 5th century BC. Archivio Museo archeologico ‘Pietro Griffo’, Agrigento

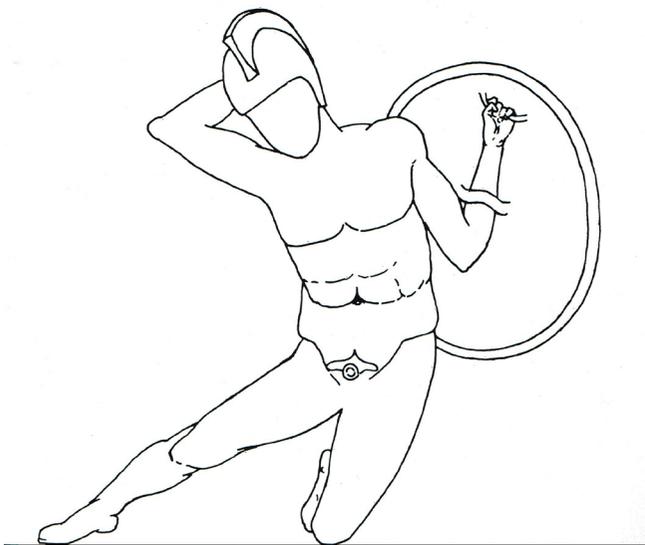




**Figure 3** Right side showing the cavity at the level of the scapula. Archivio Museo archeologico 'Pietro Griffo'

Marcello Barbanera proposed an alternative view. He believed that the four sections identified by De Miro were indeed all part of the sculpture of the warrior, but he noted an abrasion on the inner side of the thigh, which probably marked an area of connection with the other leg. He imagined a completely different posture for the figure: half-lying on the left flank, with the right arm holding a weapon, ready to hurl at the enemy, and the left arm shouldering the shield resting on the ground, on which the full weight of the body rests (**Fig. 5**).

**Figure 4** Reconstruction by Ernesto De Miro (De Miro 1968, pl. XLlb)



The sculpture has been dated to 490–480 BC thanks to comparisons with more securely dated statues of that period and with images on dies for stamping coins. Barbanera assigns the statue to a sculptor who originated in the Greek islands, given the difficulty of drawing comparisons with contemporary local sculpture in Sicily.<sup>6</sup>

Gianfranco Adornato deviated from the two previous interpretations and, on the basis of an anatomical analysis of the muscles and tendons between the head and neck, suggested that those fragments belonged to two different figures, carved in the round but belonging to the same group. The first, 'warrior A', is striding solemnly to the left towards a probable adversary, with his left leg drawn back, a posture indicated by the contraction of the muscle in the corresponding buttock, which is higher than the right, rounded one. The torso and the left hand holding a shield strap would also belong to this figure. Adornato interprets the cavity in the right shoulder blade not as accommodating a fixing to anchor the statue to the pediment, but as the point where the right arm would have been attached, with a weapon held in its fist, carved separately and inserted later (**Fig. 6**).

In Adornato's reconstruction the head would belong to a second warrior, the so-called 'warrior B', who was positioned with his head turning sharply to his left. The figure stands almost upright, striding towards the right, with a shield on his left arm to defend himself, while his right arm is lowered, the hand holding a weapon. The leg fragment would also belong to this second figure, but located in the middle part of the thigh and not directly attached to the torso as in De Miro's reconstruction. In fact this thigh does not seem to reflect the same muscle movement that is expressed in the right side of the torso and Adornato argues that it should therefore certainly be assigned to another similar figure. The two sculptures, according to Adornato, are not part of a pedimental group because their accurate and careful carving suggests that they were intended to be viewed in the round, with detailed modelling that would not have been readily visible or necessary if they were placed inside a high pediment.<sup>7</sup>

The comparisons that Adornato suggested for the purposes of chronological classification of the torso and head respectively are of interest, even if analysed separately. For the torso, there appear to be convincing comparanda among the statues of the eastern pediment of the temple of Aphaia on Aegina (490–485 BC). The great anatomical definition and the care taken to represent organic and harmonious action, movement and muscular articulation were an achievement of the Aegina masters of the first half of the 5th century BC. This style is echoed in the metopes from the temple of Zeus at Olympia and as far-reaching as the group of Tyrannicides sculpted by Kritios and Nesiotes and dated to 477–476 BC, and still further, to Myron's Diskobolos and Marsyas. These latter pieces can be placed chronologically in the mid-5th century BC, when the unified conception of the human body was fully realised in terms of differentiation of movements and, therefore, of the joints and musculature of the body.

This attempt to reproduce the relationship between musculature and motion can also be seen in depictions on

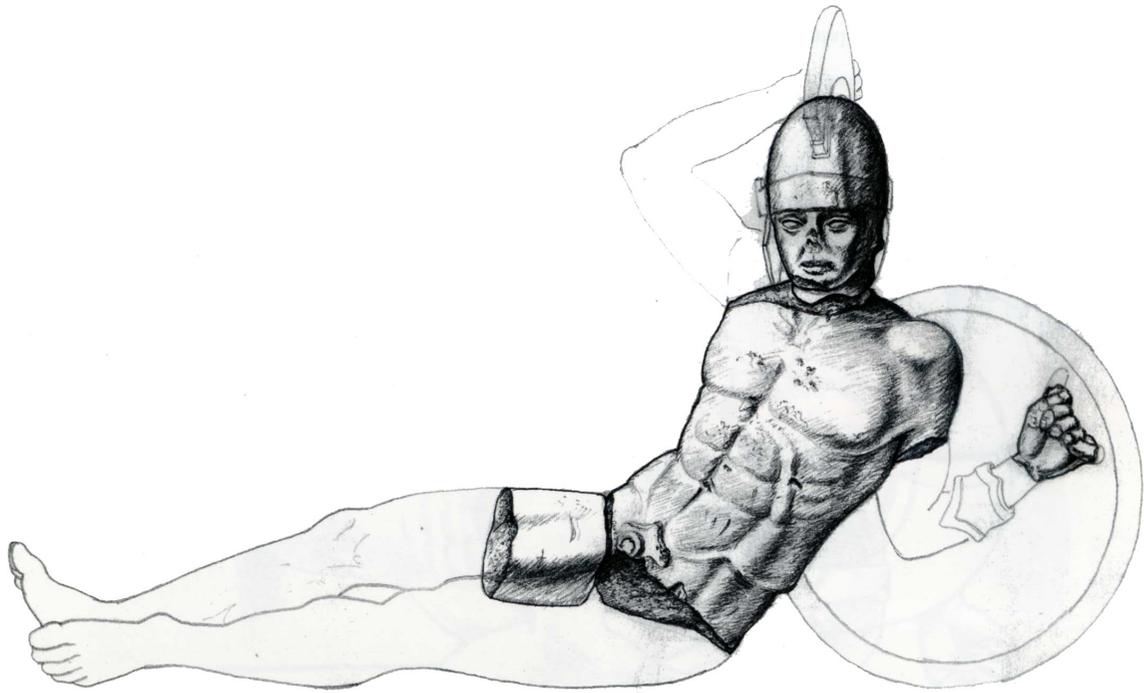


Figure 5 Reconstruction by Marcello Barbanera (Barbanera 1995, pl. 1)

pottery dating from the end of the 6th century BC, reaching its zenith in the work of the Penthesilea Painter, active between 460 and 440 BC, and again in the calyx krater of the Niobid Painter preserved in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. G 341).<sup>8</sup> The work of the Niobid Painter also features in the collections of the museum in Agrigento, with a volute krater from Gela showing, on the main body of the vessel, the killing of Penthesilea by Achilles (inv. AG 8952). Dating from the first phase of the artist's production, around 460 BC, this also has a centauroomachy scene encircling its neck on which the beasts have strongly accentuated muscles, abdominals and serratus magnus, while Achilles and his companions wear body armour with muscles, abdominals and serratus modelled to the point of abstraction, extremely reminiscent

of the muscular rendering on the torso of the marble warrior (Fig. 7). The comparanda then seem to suggest a date for the warrior in the decade 470–460 BC.

Another question concerns the head of the warrior, for which comparisons have been proposed with the pedimental groups at Olympia, particularly with regard to the rendering of the eyes and mouth and the general oval shape of the face. Strong similarities have also been noted with the faces on the metopes of temple E in Selinous and, above all, with the head of another famous statue in the Agrigento Museum, that of the 'ephebe'. The two sculptures share an identical rendering of the fleshy lips, particularly the lower lip, and of the eyebrow arch, which is very wide in relation to the eye. This feature is executed in an unusual fashion, with the

Figure 6 Reconstruction by Gianfranco Adornato: warriors B and A (Adornato 2003, figs 23 and 26)

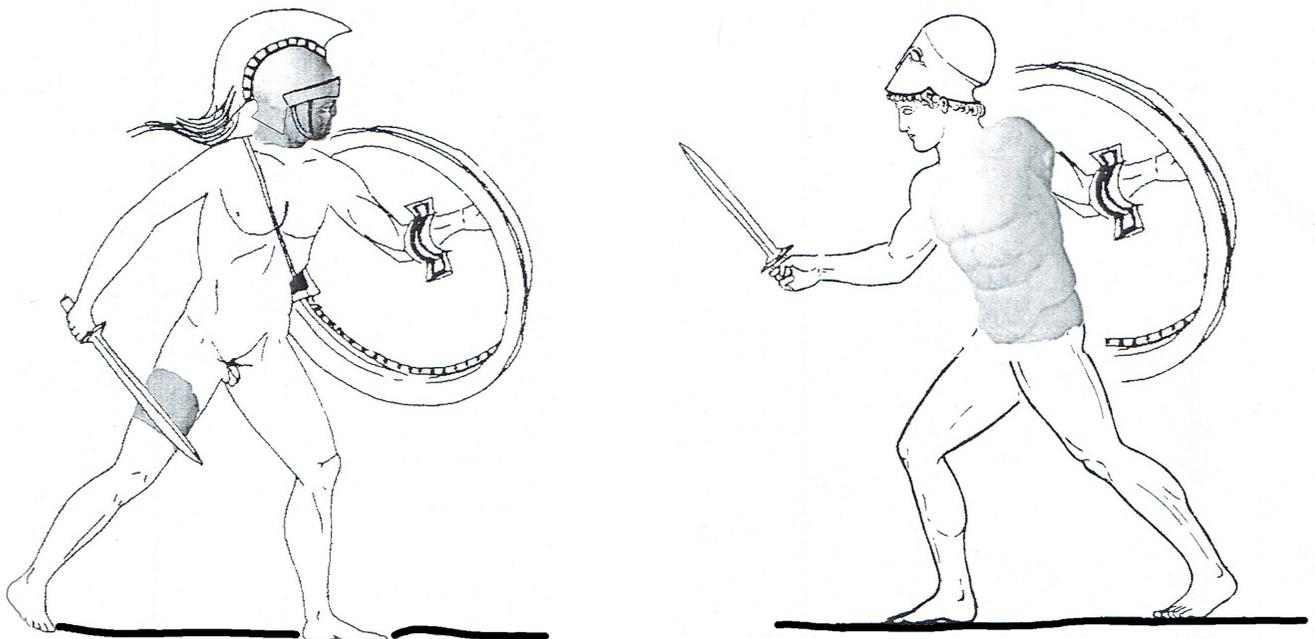




Figure 7 Volute krater by the Niobid Painter with an Amazonomachy scene, c. 460 BC, Archivio Museo archeologico 'Pietro Griffo' (photo by Angelo Pitrone)

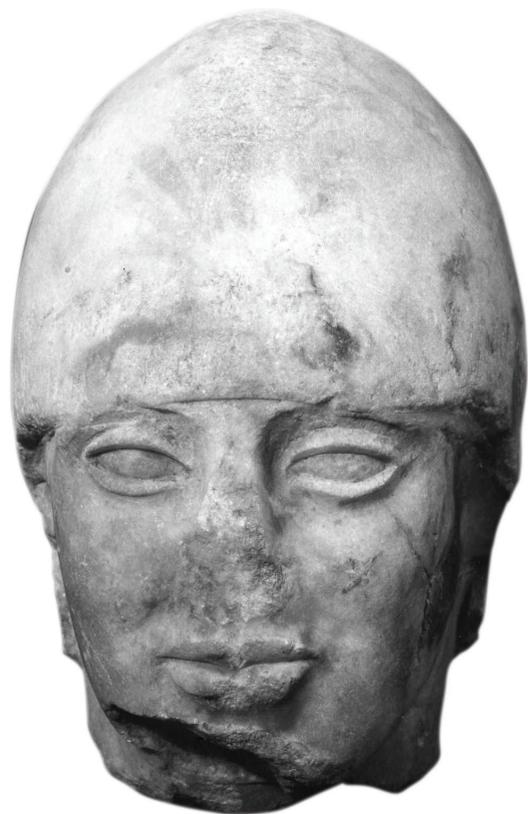
upper eyelid very thick and heavy, unlike the lower one, which traces a broad S-shaped line outwards and with the tear duct pointing downwards (Fig. 8).

The elements highlighted above appear to be a practice characteristic of the artistic production in Agrigento dating from the end of the 6th century BC until well into the 5th, both in sculpture and in pottery production. The use of the *ugnetto*, or fine shaping knife, on both sculptures to divide and at the same time to emphasise the lips, finds no obvious comparison either from other settlements in Sicily, or indeed other parts of the Greek world. It appears, then, to be a characteristic technique of an Agrigentine sculptural workshop, which also produced the statue of the ephebe around 485–475 BC. In light of the above, pinning down production of the torso appears more complex: was this carved by the same sculptor as the head, or a different one?

### Restoration work

The conservation initiative carried out by the Restoration Laboratory of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro in Palermo took a number of issues into consideration. In addition to the problems concerning the statue's stability that hindered a greater structural understanding of the piece, there was a desire to fill lacunae in the technical and scientific information about the statue and its delicate surfaces that retain traces of the ancient polychromy and decorative patterns. This scientific in-depth study included non-invasive investigations that made it possible, first and foremost, to map the presence of the metal pins that connect the three fragments, and in some cases to evaluate their thickness and depth. This was necessary

Figure 8 Heads of the ephebe and the warrior, 480–470 BC. Archivio Museo archeologico 'Pietro Griffo'



because the sculpture had not been moved since the last occasion of its reassembly for display in the museum, and the system anchoring the three parts had not been checked either.<sup>9</sup>

The statue, carved from white Parian marble, was installed on a metal support that is inserted below the pelvis.<sup>10</sup> The supporting dowel of the entire sculpture was unstable and caused slight oscillations that mainly affected the head. The centre of gravity of the head did not correspond with that of the torso: the head was spaced about 2cm away from the torso and anchored to it by a central pin with a diameter of 1cm, which penetrated some 6cm into the mass of the marble. The head thus had no surface contact with the torso and was subjected to continuous stress concentrating particularly on its lower part and on the left cheek, which had already been affected by lesions that could have become further aggravated by even brief but regular traumas.

Images preserved in the museum's photographic archive show the torso alone, without the head and thigh, as it was initially exhibited. The torso had been connected to a metal support by means of two large pins 5cm apart, inserted into holes drilled underneath the pelvis about 3cm in diameter and about 10cm deep (**Fig. 9**). Ultimately, only one of these two holes was used for the support of the statue as it is currently displayed, while the other was filled in and sealed with a weak mortar that was not as stable and strong as the original marble. A georadar (ground-penetrating radar) and pacometer survey revealed, as expected, that there was also another metal pin, one connecting the torso to the leg.

The three fragments – head, torso and right leg – were affixed using a polyester mastic adhesive, a product normally used for assembling lighter-weight craftwork, which is sensitive to UV and which loses mechanical strength after a few years. The same adhesive was also used for the surface stuccoing of both the assembly pin between head and torso and that between torso and leg in the attempt, in both cases, to create a fill between non-connecting parts (**Fig. 10**).

At the time before this intervention, the physical condition of the three pieces that make up the statue varied, since they were discovered, as already mentioned, in different archaeological contexts and were therefore in contact with different types of burial material and geological minerals. The helmeted head is broken off at the neck, and the face, now missing part of the nose and chin, has suffered from scratches on the lower lip. The right cheek, the chin and above all the left cheek have all been affected by an unsightly reddish-brown colouring caused by oxidation of ferrous origin or by lead oxide. This has altered the original tone of the marble surface, and also occurs in patches on other parts of the head. This disfiguration is probably due to extended contact of the head with pieces of metal, specifically iron, which was present in the pit in which it was found. The left cheek has a severe lesion that radiates from the base of the neck, in fact from the dowel hole, while another crack, parallel to the first and about 2cm away from it, runs up towards the cheekbone and reaches as far as the lower eyelid. This latter lesion is crossed transversely by a third one, which has caused a dangerous flaking of the



**Figure 9** The torso as first exhibited. Archivio Museo archeologico 'Pietro Griffo'

marble surface in the middle of the cheek, which was steadily worsening and clearly near to the stage of final detachment (**Fig. 11**).

There are broad scrapes or scratches along the lower edge of the helmet and in the area on the top of the head, which are not at all random or accidental, but applied in a regular pattern, made with a fine-tipped chisel known as a *subbia*. This roughening of the surface was probably part of a deliberate preparation process for the attaching of applied decoration.

The limbless torso is intact as far as the right buttock and part of the left and, in spite of numerous and widespread scratches and scaling, it shows only minimal areas of surface damage along its fractured edges. The integrity of the whole, however, is compromised by a rather dangerous crack affecting the right side, running from the back of the torso at shoulder height – the area with the cavity – all the way to the chest at the front.

The surface of the stone retains a natural, homogeneous yellowish-brown tone, slightly greyed by atmospheric

**Figure 10** Modern fill between the non-connecting torso and right leg. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



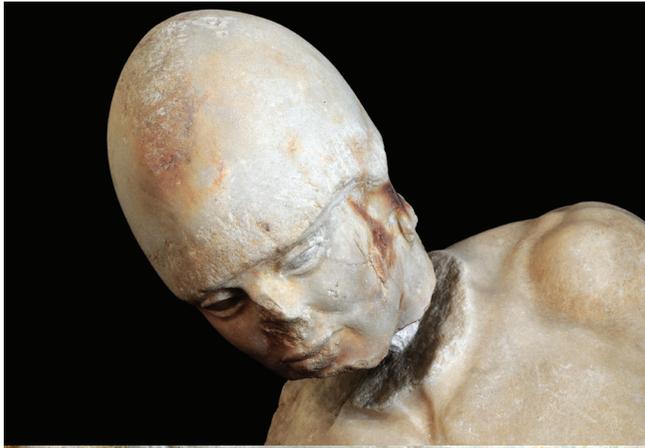


Figure 11 The head and the left cheek before conservation. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



Figure 12 The leg fragment before conservation. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



pollutants and greasy residues from handling. There are also root marks adhering to localised areas of the marble from contact with underground plant life present in the earth in which the piece was buried for centuries. The surface is dulled and rendered opaque by residues of gypsum, mostly evident in the more protected recesses of the torso, as seen in residue from moulds that were been taken of the sculpture, one in the 1960s, on the occasion of the reassembly of the three fragments, and the other in the 1990s, at the time of Marcello Barbanera's study and reconstruction. His cast was exhibited in the collection of plaster reproductions at the La Sapienza University in Rome.

The third piece, the section of right thigh, is broken off between the groin and just above the knee. A blackish substance of carbonaceous origin has discoloured its surface and penetrated extensively into the marble grains, whose macroporosity has encouraged its absorption. In the absence of any documentation dating from when the fragment was first discovered, it may be deduced that this substance was probably the remnants of burnt residues inside the cistern where the head was buried for centuries. Furthermore, the sculpture is completely covered with earth residue from the excavation site, which is very tough and adheres strongly to the marble surface. This partly covers the localised surface scratches that, in several areas, reveal the same crystal granular structure as found on the torso, and a corresponding yellowish-brown tone of natural weathering of the marble (**Fig. 12**).

Prior to the recent conservation work a preliminary operation was undertaken in the form of a 3D model executed with a laser scanner (**Fig. 13**). This facilitated the mapping of all of the surface irregularities with great precision in order to highlight the conservation work, both historical and that which was apparently required. The entire conservation process was undertaken choosing products and technologies that are ecologically sustainable, compatible and similar to the original material from which the sculpture was made.

The stages of surface cleaning of the sculpture were carried out with particular care and attention to the sculpture's characteristic patina, a safeguarding measure to ensure that there was a correct tonal balance between the separate parts. Such unity was not presented prior to this recent conservation treatment and it was obvious that the fragments came from different excavation contexts and had suffered various degrees and types of surface damage. Moreover, the fragments had not been subjected to any kind of intervention for over 40 years. Cleaning tests made it possible to select the areas where intervention was required and to establish an assessment of the overall state of conservation of the marble fragments. They were the result of a visual and tactile analysis assisted by diagnostic tools: contact microscopes with different magnifications, a Dynolite (digital microscope), a portable UV lamp and natural raking light, in addition to infrared examinations to detect any traces of polychromy.

Cleaning work commenced on the lower portion of the sculpture, the buttocks and right thigh, because the blackening and the widespread accretions were most dominant here. Various inert poultices were placed on small

test areas, soaked in deionised water and kept in place for different application times. After these were removed, the surface was then cleaned with tiny cotton buds or microfibre sponges, moistened with water, with due care taken to detect any surviving traces of ancient pigment, while work on the more tenacious concretions was undertaken with the help of a surgical scalpel and sometimes even a micro scalpel.

The following conservation operations were then carried out. First of all, atmospheric particulates were removed, initially with a brush and then with the aid of sponges very slightly moistened with deionised water. The second treatment involved the application of small sheets of Japanese rice paper soaked in deionised water, which were left to dry out on the surface (Fig. 14). This operation was repeated three or four times over the entire sculpture, in order to desorb any surface salts and to free the pores of pollutant particulates.

The widespread residues of burial deposits and small root marks, particularly notable on much of the left side of the sculpture, were removed mechanically. The surface did not require any disinfection, however, as the results of culturing tests were negative. On the areas of the face and the lower part of the helmet that showed reddish oxidation, controlled precision mechanical cleaning was carried out as a preliminary measure using a scalpel and microfibre glass pens. After this, suitably wrapped chelation tablets were applied repeatedly to the same areas (Fig. 15). This

**Figure 14 Application of sheets of Japanese rice paper.** Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



**Figure 13 Execution of the 3D model.** Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo

operation stimulated a process of revitalising the stained marble, brightening and clearing the surface disfigured by the reddish colouring, and in some cases made it possible to remove the aesthetically disfiguring tonal effect completely.

Softening and desorbing compresses based on inert clay were applied to the marble leg fragment (Fig. 16). Due to its macroporosity, the marble was impregnated with a black substance, probably elements of carbonaceous origin.

Examining the surface by tactile contact has enabled us to identify certain sculptural peculiarities that have raised questions about the relationship of the three fragments that form the restored sculpture. Around the adductor muscles of

**Figure 15 Application of chelation tablets.** Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo





**Figure 16** Application of softening and desorbing compresses. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo

the inner thigh, there is broad raised area on the surface below the sartorius muscle, which indicates that the two thighs should be positioned close together, probably touching, as in Marcello Barbanera's reconstruction. Moreover, seen from the front, the leg appears to be too large in relation to the torso. This anomaly occurs because the position of the sartorius muscle is incorrect in relation to the groin: the profiles do not follow. Furthermore, the depression that runs from the iliac fossa to the knee is not continuous across the two fragments of torso and leg, which confirms that the latter was incorrectly rotated and therefore needed to be realigned.

Now we move on to the relationship between the head and the torso. There is a gap of at least 2/3cm between the

**Figure 17** Left shoulder showing a detail of the cephalic vein. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



head and the torso, and if the head is turned 1.5cm to the left the long neck muscle, the sternocleidomastoid, appears more anatomically correct. If turned further still, the perspective improves and helps to explain the asymmetrical manner in which the two sides of the face are modelled. The eyes, in fact, are slightly different in shape and length. The right side of the face is more detailed, particularly where the earlobe and locks of hair are visible beneath the lower edge of the helmet, while the left is less detailed and defined, an indication that it was probably difficult for the sculptor to access this area compared with the right side of the head. Many clues as to the original posture of the figure have emerged as a direct result of this recent investigation. Now that it has been suggested that the head should be repositioned, one may imagine a more defensive position for the figure. The line of the shield's edge can be traced behind the warrior's left shoulder, together with the line of fracture of the left arm, which leaves the entire left side of the torso perfectly defined and smooth. The warrior was taking refuge beneath his shield, with one arm raised even higher, straining with exertion as indicated by the prominent cephalic vein on the left shoulder (**Fig. 17**).

Such a position for the head, with the left side almost completely hidden, would also explain the absence of a palmette decoration on that side of the helmet, while one is clearly visible on its right side and on the front (**Fig. 18**).

This was one of the most exciting outcomes of this conservation intervention. There are in fact two decorative palmettes on the right side and on the front of the helmet, which are barely visible to the naked eye. They were brought to light initially by analysis with infrared thermography



**Figure 18** Palmettes on the front and on the right side of the helmet. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo

**Figure 19** The palmette on the right side, photographed using raking light. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo



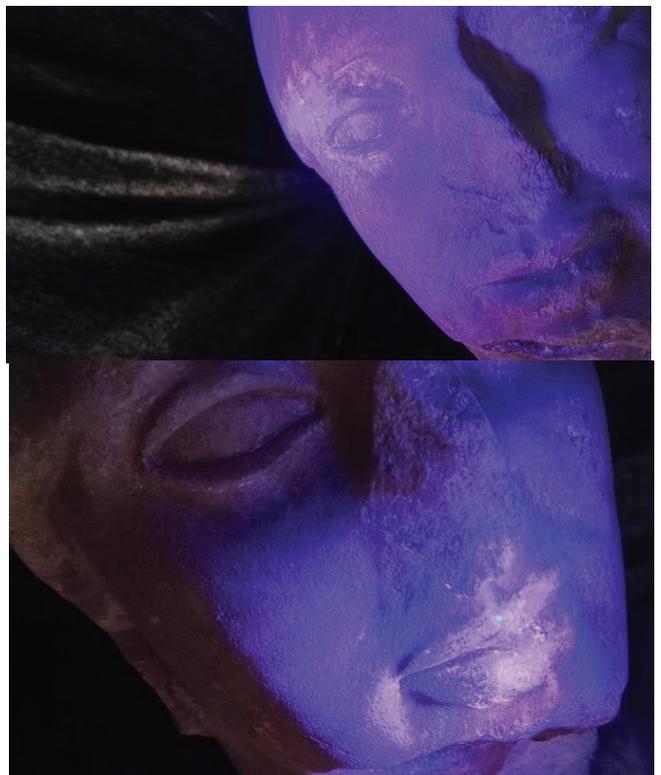
carried out during a ‘reconnaissance’ survey of the piece following photographic documentation using raking light (**Fig. 19**).

The surface of the leaves that form the palmettes are slightly rougher in texture than the rest of the surface of the helmet, which is almost perfectly smooth. This was a technical process used in ancient times to hold colour, with the porosity of the marble helping to absorb and fuse it intimately with the material of the stone itself.

During the course of diagnostic work carried out by technical experts at the University of Palermo, the opportunity was taken to analyse the statue by means of UV fluorescence and infrared thermography tests. These were undertaken to check for and localise any inconsistencies attributed to the different techniques used to model the sculpted surfaces and/or to the presence of any film either of colour, primer or preparation for adding colour. In addition to offering definitive confirmation of the imprint of the palmettes on the helmet, UV fluorescence has also brought to light the pupils in the warrior’s eyes, particularly the right one, and marking on the inside of the lips (**Fig. 20**).

There are many examples from archaeological reports that recorded the presence of colour on ancient sculptures upon discovery, which was subsequently and quickly lost due to contact with the atmosphere. More evidence has been lost because of ill-advised cleaning of marble surfaces aimed at removing concretions of earth, or – worse still – as a result of the reproduction of an exact plaster cast, a practice that has in the past affected, or even destroyed, the outermost layers of the extremely delicate artefacts to which colour had been applied, leaving them washed out. There are no longer any colours visible on the statue of the ‘warrior’ today, but

**Figure 20** The eye and the lips under UV fluorescence. Photographic archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo<sup>11</sup>



thanks to new research undertaken with non-invasive techniques the first studies have been initiated and are now under way. In this initial phase, attention has been focused on the head, where decorative elements can clearly be discerned in the form of the two palmettes, made up of 13 leaves, six on each side of decreasing size, plus one large one in the centre, which branch off from a central motif.

## Notes

- 1 Ricci 1940, 135–6.
- 2 The marble has been analysed by the Laboratory for Analysis of Ancient Materials (LAMA) at the University of Venice (founded and directed by Professor Lorenzo Lazzarini, who is now part of the Scientific Council) within the framework of collaboration with the Polo Regionale di Agrigento per i Siti Culturali – Museo Archeologico “Pietro Griffo” di Agrigento, together with the Associazione Lapis of Palermo and the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro of Palermo. The analysis also established that the head and the leg were carved from a different marble compared to the marble used for the torso and the hand.
- 3 De Miro 1968, 145–6.
- 4 De Waele 1982, 271–8.
- 5 Knigge 1965.
- 6 Barbanera 1995 41–75.
- 7 Adornato 2003, 12–15.
- 8 Beazley 1963, 601 (no. 22).
- 9 Non-invasive investigations using combined methods (georadar, X-ray, ultrasound and UV fluorescence for taking pictures) were

conducted by the Geolab Laboratory in Palermo on behalf of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro of Palermo.

- 10 The entire sculpture, including the support with its base, measures 185cm. The three fragments that comprise it measure respectively: the head *c.* 26 x 22cm (maximum circumference 59cm); the torso *c.* 65 x 35cm (maximum circumference 97cm, depth 22cm measured in the middle of the torso); the leg 18 x 16cm (maximum circumference 52cm). The supporting pin is 86cm high, while the stone base (a truncated pyramid) is 14cm high and 50cm wide.
- 11 The photographs from the archive of the Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro are by Fabiola Saitta and Maria Settineri.

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# Chapter 8

## The Chatsworth House Connection: A Marble Leg from Agrigento

Peter John Higgs  
British Museum

utting out from a wall of the West Lodge at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, is a part of an ancient marble leg, 33cm in length, preserved from the upper thigh to just below the knee (**Fig. 1**).<sup>1</sup> The sculpture is displayed in what has been called the Marble Museum, an intriguing assortment of sculptural and architectural fragments from the Greek and Roman periods, accompanied by a choice selection of ancient terracotta reliefs and figures. This antiquarium collection was set up in the West Lodge at the grand entrance of the house, probably during the 1820s and 1830s, as a showcase for the more fragmentary sculptures collected by the 6th Duke of Devonshire and his family. Some of these had been purchased from the famous sculptor Antonio Canova's collection where the fragments had served as models for some of his masterpieces.

Construction of the enormous mansion at Chatsworth House started in 1552 but the building was significantly remodelled between the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The 6th Duke of Devonshire, William George Spencer Cavendish (1790–1858), was a voracious collector of art and acquired many of the family's most remarkable antiquities. He had such a passion for sculpture that he travelled across Europe widely, visiting the palaces and homes of royalty and nobility and admiring their works of art.<sup>2</sup> With his great wealth he was able to purchase many contemporary sculptures and ancient pieces, notably from the studio and collection of Canova on his death in 1822. The duke established his main sculpture gallery at Chatsworth, its design inspired by the Braccio Nuovo in the Vatican Museums, Rome.

Two of the duke's most famous antiquities are now in the British Museum: the well-known bronze head of a youthful deity, probably Apollo, from Tamassos in Cyprus; and a head of a Lapith youth that joined a torso originally part of the now largely fragmentary south metope XVI from the Parthenon in Athens.<sup>3</sup> Much lesser known is the marble leg, which has rarely been mentioned in academic publications. Compared with the better-preserved Roman sculptures and neoclassical works by renowned sculptors of the 18th and 19th centuries that grace the sumptuous sculpture galleries in the main part of the house, the fragmentary marble leg has really only caught the eye of a handful of ancient sculpture specialists: its location in a non-public section of the estate has further increased its obscurity. Published only once previously with a photograph, in the fine volume *Die Antiken Skulpturen in Chatsworth* edited by Dietrich Boschung, Henner von Hesberg and Andreas Linfert, in the series of books about ancient sculpture in English country houses, the leg is still not widely known even among scholars of Greek sculpture.<sup>4</sup> Ironically, this fragment is one of the few antiquities at Chatsworth with an actual provenance, although in this collection more of the Greek fragments of sculpture and architecture have find-spots than their Roman counterparts.<sup>5</sup> The leg was picked up in Agrigento, ancient Akragas, during the duke's visit there in 1833 and said to have been found in the so-called 'temple of Herakles', now better known as temple A.<sup>6</sup> The duke apparently enjoyed his visit to 'Girgenti', the historic name for the city, the landscape, ruins and environment all helping to restore his spirits after his recent spate of ill health.<sup>7</sup> While in the



**Figure 1** West Lodge Museum, Chatsworth House. The leg is mounted on the wall almost in the centre of the photograph (image © Paul Barker/Country Life)

town the duke had also aspired to procure a famous sarcophagus housed in the cathedral, with relief decoration showing the legend of Hippolytos and Phaedra. Admiration for this 2nd–3rd-century AD marble sarcophagus was first aroused by Joseph Hermann von Riedesel and published in his travel volumes and then admired by such antiquarians as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Richard Payne Knight, although the latter was slightly less effusive about its quality than other commentators.<sup>8</sup> It would have been a great prize for the duke's collection, but his hopes were dashed by the British consul, who refused permission to remove the sculpture and the sarcophagus remains in the cathedral to this day. Unfortunately, a detailed account of how the duke acquired the marble leg does not exist, but the recorded find-spot of the temple of Herakles allows us to associate it with several other important fragments of marble sculpture found in more recent times in ancient Akragas, which are described in detail in the paper by Donatella Mangione and her co-authors in this volume. This paper provides us with an opportunity to highlight this important fragment of sculpture, found in a part of the Mediterranean where it is relatively rare to discover Greek marble sculpture.

### The leg

Emerging from a dense mass of a short garment is a powerful naked thigh, preserved through the knee to the very upper part of the shin (**Figs 2–4**). The garment appears to be slipping to the left of the subject's leg, its fabric abruptly fluctuating from horizontal to diagonal folds. The horizontal folds mark the point where the garment rested on the upper thigh and on both the upper and lower break lines there are minute traces of folds that prove that the garment ran across and under the thigh: the present break probably occurred at this weaker point where the bare leg met the garment. The main mass of drapery folds is separated from the limb by a deep channel. Because the leg is mounted on a wall in the museum at Chatsworth and the broken surface at the upper thigh was filled with plaster, it has not been

possible to examine the break. It cannot therefore be ruled out that the leg was carved separately and originally attached to the rest of the figure, but there is no visible evidence for this. The muscles indicate that this is a left leg, with the clothing slipping away down the outer part of the thigh. The knee bends sharply with the upper thigh muscle (rectus femoris) extending, while the lower inner thigh muscles (gracilis and adductor longus) tense as the leg bends or moves swiftly. The muscles and tendon around the patella are carefully but not artificially modelled. The kneecap itself, though, is broad and bulging, but quite flat in profile, resembling the simulated modelling of a knee seen on bronze greaves. At the lower break, below the patella, the upper part of the tibia, the tibial tuberosity, is extremely pronounced and shows that the lower leg was not bent back but perhaps even slightly exceeded a 45-degree angle. It would suit a figure in active pose, running, fighting or kneeling down. The proper right side of the leg is not as robustly modelled and the extensive scars left by the rasp indicate a lesser degree of finish, which is to be expected on a part of the figure less easily accessible when the sculpture was being carved and not as visible once set up in its original location.

There are faint traces of a red pigment on the upper thigh, which may be part of the original colour, but might also be more modern: no tests have been undertaken as yet to analyse the pigment. The marble is medium- to fine-grained, perhaps Parian, a conclusion drawn by the current author from a visual inspection. Linfert proposed Paros as the most likely source of marble in his catalogue entry for the piece.<sup>9</sup>

Although only a fragment, enough survives of the sculpture to compare it with other works in order to determine the original posture of the statue and its date. While the pose is relatively close to a flexed leg belonging to the pedimental sculptures from the temple of Apollo Daphnephoros at Eretria in mainland Greece, its style and form reveal a more advanced stage of anatomical modelling.<sup>10</sup> The fabric on the garment worn by the figure from Eretria, possibly an Amazon, lies in flat, pleated layers, while that on the Chatsworth leg forms deep waving grooves, resembling hair and following the 'wet look' trend that was a feature of many other contemporary sculptures from Greek settlements in Sicily. The limestone draped sections from the metopes of temple E at Selinous date to the 460s BC, but could push into the following decade also, compare well in their characteristic fluid carved forms with our leg.<sup>11</sup> Part of a female upper body and a section of arm reveal a similar treatment of the drapery; in those instances their garments are probably chitons.<sup>12</sup> Closer still, and in marble, is the so-called Motya Youth, which dates to around the 460s BC and is discussed in the paper by Caterina Greco in this volume (p. 52).<sup>13</sup> On this magnificent sculpture the fine fabric of the garment appears as fluid as if it had been poured like liquid over the taut, muscular body, forming flowing grooves and curved-topped ridges as it trickled down the figure. Admittedly, on the Chatsworth leg the folds form a denser layer and are less snug to the body, but this is the point where they start to flare out over the thigh as if being stirred up by both the figure's movement and some



Figures 2–4 Views of the marble leg

natural force, the wind perhaps. The similarity is so close that, if the Motya Youth were to raise his garment and expose his bare thigh and knee, the Chatsworth leg could be one and the same.

But the leg’s provenance obviously brings it closer to the fragments of sculpture discovered in various locations between the temples of Herakles, (temple A), and of Zeus at ancient Agrigento. They are all related by style, scale and marble type. The so-called warrior of Agrigento is well known and is the topic of the paper by Mangione *et al.* in this volume. This leg cannot belong to the warrior, of course, because, despite missing his entire left leg, the groin and torso above the break are nude and not draped. But there are other fragments that might be from the same sculptural tableau (see p. 57 of this volume). One of them is a small section of draped limb, probably an arm that, despite its calcined surface, shows similar gently waving pleats of material to those in the garment sweeping around the Chatsworth leg.<sup>14</sup> The folds of fabric could be part of a short tunic as seen on a figure of Perseus on a red-figured hydria attributed to the Pan Painter, about 460 BC, where the garment’s soft fabric gathers and undulates in fluid ripples comparable to those on the marble leg (Fig. 5).<sup>15</sup>

The powerful modelling of the leg with its carefully articulated musculature combined with a somewhat soft finish compares well with the other fragments found in Agrigento. The treatment of the flesh, muscle and sinew around the knee echoes that of the warrior torso with its almost exaggerated anatomical modelling. This is not a realistic approach to sculpting the human body, but an exercise in breaking down the component parts and

representing them as elements of the whole, rather than blending surfaces into a more organic human form. This style follows that of the transition from the late archaic into the early classical period, which is marked by a great number of original Greek sculptures, not least those from the east pediment of the temple of Aphaia on Aigina, dated to the 470s BC.<sup>16</sup> While the modelling of the Chatsworth leg closely resembles that of a fallen warrior who lies wounded in the south-east corner of the east pediment (Fig. 6), the pose and angle better suit that of the kneeling archer, Herakles, from the north-east corner of that pediment as shown in Figure 7.<sup>17</sup> The posture and musculature follow each other, but the fabric of the garment framing the Chatsworth leg is carved in more fluid folds than that on the archer from Aigina. The differences relate more to the

Figure 5 Red-figured hydria attributed to the Pan Painter, showing Perseus on the left after decapitating Medusa, c. 460 BC. British Museum, 1873,0820.352





**Figure 6** Dying warrior from the east pediment of the temple of Aphaia on Aigina, c. 480–470 BC. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München (photograph by Kopperman)

texture of their respective garments than chronological and stylistic criteria, with the archer wearing a cuirass with leather fringe and the Chatsworth leg garment made of a softer material, perhaps a short chlamys or chiton.

The question of dress also raises another important issue. Is the leg male or female? Linfert describes it as male while, in an unpublished hand-guide of classical sculpture in English country houses, Geoffrey Waywell considered it female, and perhaps originally belonging to an Amazon.<sup>18</sup> An Amazon is indeed a possibility, but compared with other sculptures of Amazons, the modelling of the musculature is far more pronounced and powerful. A mounted Amazon from the west pediment of the temple of Asklepios at Epidauros and a similar unprovenanced composition, although fragmentary, now in Boston, show a less developed musculature, but date from about a century later than the

**Figure 7** Herakles drawing a bow, from the east pediment of the temple of Aphaia on Aigina, c. 480–470 BC. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München (photograph by Kopperman)



Chatsworth piece.<sup>19</sup> It cannot be ruled out that the leg belonged to a female, conceivably an Amazon, or even Artemis who was also represented sporting a short garment. In our search for other possible fragments of female figures from this group of marble sculptures there is only one likely candidate. Marcello Barbanera identified the fragment of draped arm as coming from a female figure in his publication of the warrior and associated sculptures.<sup>20</sup> Gianfranco Adornato wisely does not try to assign a sex to such a fragment.<sup>21</sup> In the present volume Mangione refers to the arm as female. So there is a possibility that if all of these fragments, including the Chatsworth leg, belong to the same sculptural composition, there might have been both male and female protagonists. There seems little reason to doubt that the mood of the sculptures is combative, and that the leg might belong to a warrior, male, less likely female, but there is no further clue as to the type of conflict, whether a gigantomachy or an Amazonomachy, or a straightforward Greek versus Greek fight. If all the fragments do indeed belong together, and in terms of find-spots, scale, marble, design and style there seems no reason to doubt their connection, then might they be architectural or part of a freestanding group?

Few sources provide us with information about the ancient city of Akragas and most that do survive are very general. Among the most detailed are the histories of Diodorus Siculus, although his commentaries are still only fleeting. He briefly refers to the pedimental sculptures of the temple of Olympieon Zeus, mentioning a gigantomachy on the east pediment and the Fall of Troy on the west.<sup>22</sup> Diodorus clearly states that the figures on the east pediment were wondrous for their size and beauty and that is certainly enough to preclude these smaller than life-sized marble fragments of warriors from the pediments of that enormous temple. Construction of the Olympieon might have begun in the early part of the 5th century BC, with work carrying on for the next few decades, although because of its enormous size it was never completely finished.<sup>23</sup> While the original motive for the temple might have predated the Battle of Himera, its sculptural themes could perhaps support a view that the temple eventually became a symbol of victory over the foreign Carthaginian threat: the colossal giants and the fragments of pediments all appear to postdate 480 BC.

Fragments of stuccoed limestone from colossal sculptures carved in relief have been assigned to the temple's pediments, but are now effectively lost and known only through early drawings or extremely weathered specimens.<sup>24</sup> Andrew Stewart raises the interesting point that the temple might actually have celebrated the victory over the Etruscans at the Battle of Cumae in 474 BC.<sup>25</sup> Either way, the sculptural themes perfectly suit a victory monument.

While it has been suggested that the marble figures adorned the pediment of temple A, the Chatsworth leg was found there and that some of the other marble fragments were discovered in its vicinity, it should be noted that none of the fragments are so large that they could not have been moved around and discarded once the group was dismantled: most pieces were discovered in secondary contexts. Like the Olympieion, temple A seems to have been built over a long period of time, with discrepancies in its decoration that suggest different chronological periods of construction. Major adaptations were undertaken in the interior of the temple during the 3rd to 1st centuries BC.<sup>26</sup> The architectural features belonging to temple A, formerly assigned to the cult of Herakles but now possibly to be reassigned to Apollo according to Adornato, seem much older in form and style. The traditional date is late 6th century BC, but some elements point to a refurbishment in the early decades of the 5th century BC. The marble fragments from the area of temple A and the Olympieion were worked fully in the round, which might suggest that they were intended to be seen from all angles, opposing the likelihood of them belonging to a pedimental group. But the pedimental sculptures from Aigina and later from the Parthenon were also modelled with great detail around the backs; only some of the Olympia pedimental figures seem to be treated almost as high relief sculptures.<sup>27</sup> We cannot, therefore, use that criterion to assign the marble fragments in question to a freestanding monument only.

Perhaps historical and political events might add some flesh to the bones that these marble fragments of warriors symbolise. If the date in the 470s is correct, which seems more than plausible, might we restore them to a victory monument set up to celebrate and commemorate the city's prominent and successful role in halting the Carthaginian invasion at the Battle of Himera in 480 BC? Led by Theron, the tyrant of Akragas, the army put up strong resistance to the Carthaginians, long enough for Gelon of Syracuse's army to turn up and make a surprise attack. The Carthaginians were slaughtered in large numbers, with many of the survivors being taken to Akragas, according to Diodorus Siculus, where they were enslaved and forced to work on major building projects in the city, probably including the greatest temples.<sup>28</sup> While there is speculation that the great 'Atlas' style figures that are the prominent feature of the decoration of the enormous temple of Zeus represent these Carthaginian prisoners of war, literally bound to their task for the figures were formed in courses of building blocks and not freestanding, the current thinking is that while the initial construction of the vast temple might have predated 480 BC, work continued well into the middle decades of the century and was, in fact, never completed. The whole temple might have been rebranded as a victory monument to the

Akragantine Greeks' victory over barbarous forces, but if not, or in addition to that rebranding, there may have been supplementary sculptural dedications. Stewart recently made the interesting observation that on Aigina, where the later temple of Aphaia constructed in the 470s might have celebrated the victory over the Persians, some of the sculptures once thought to have belonged to a superfluous third set of pedimental sculptures in fact come from a freestanding group showing warriors in combat.

At Akragas the marble fragments, uniform in date, scale, material and design, might come from a related dedicatory monument raised on a plinth, to be seen from all sides, and representing combat scenes. We have potentially two male warriors: one leg from a figure draped in a short tunic (the Chatsworth piece that might have been from a male warrior or a well-built Amazon) and a small fragment of a draped arm. Could this latter piece be from a Persian warrior, wearing a sleeved garment? If so, it is possible that there were groups showing Greeks fighting Amazons and Persians, symbolising the civilised Greek world confronting barbarism. Such a tableau would be more than appropriate for a victory monument set up in the decade after the Battle of Himera, said by some to have been fought on the very same day as either the famous Battle of Salamis or of Plataia, key moments in the Greeks' fight against the Persians.<sup>29</sup> More fragments of this group might emerge in later excavations of ancient Akragas. The pieces were certainly scattered over a relatively large area once they had been destroyed, so there is potential for new finds. Hopefully new discoveries might start to unite these disparate fragments, perhaps even form more complete figures in the future, but for now the Chatsworth leg can be reintroduced into the dialogue about early 5th-century sculpture from ancient Greek Sicily and into the broader spectrum of victory monuments.

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### Notes

- 1 The leg is mounted on a wall of the lodge, which is referred to as the Marble Museum but is not a part of the house open to the public.
- 2 For a detailed discussion of the acquisition of artworks see Yarrington 2009.
- 3 For the Chatsworth Apollo, see Bouquillon *et al.* 2006, 227–61. For the Parthenon metope, see Brommer 1967, Volume I, text: 100–2, Volume II, plates: 202–5.
- 4 Boschung *et al.* 1997, 18–19, cat. 3, plate 6, 1–2.
- 5 In the most recent publication of the antiquities at Chatsworth, Boschung *et al.* 1997. Few of the sculptures have a provenance. Some of the Greek pieces were previously in the Canova collection, a selection of the finest Roman portraits came from Apt in France, and

- one or two others from the Bay of Naples region and Rome. Other antiquities, including the Chatsworth Apollo, were purchased in Smyrna, Turkey, but the history of how the metope head from the Parthenon arrived at Chatsworth is unknown, although there are other fragments of reliefs in the collection that are said to be from Athens and several column drums from the temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion. This column has been erected in the gardens of the estate, surmounted by a bust of the 6th Duke of Devonshire. Some of the other architectural elements come from Melos, Delos and possibly the Erechtheion in Athens. There is also a Hellenistic grave relief that was procured in Salonika, Macedonia.
- 6 Adornato recently reinterpreted the ancient literary sources that mention a temple of Herakles and combined this with new archaeological research. He proposed that rather than the large, early Temple A, which has traditionally been given to Herakles, his shrine ought to be sought near the Greek Agora and the Roman forum. ‘Temple A’, he now proposes, served the cult of Apollo. See Adornato 2011, 103–20.
  - 7 See Lees-Milne 1991, 111–12.
  - 8 Torregrossa 2014–15, 1–93.
  - 9 Boschung *et al.* 1997, 18.
  - 10 Τουλούπα 2002, 61–2, plate 35.
  - 11 Dates for the metopes range from 480 to 450 BC, but their date surely depends on that of the architecture. The metopes would have been difficult to carve *in situ*, for they are an integral part of the Doric frieze and rely on the construction of the opisthodomos and pronaos. Dates vary from 490 to 450 for the construction of the temple. A cautionary date in the 460s seems reasonable based on the style of the sculpture. See Marconi 1994, 137, where he states that the recent excavations by Giorgio Guillini place the fourth phase of the construction of the temple to 460–450 BC, which included the building of the porches and the carved metopes within its Doric frieze.
  - 12 Marconi 1994, 108, no. 38, 1 and 110, no. 47, 1–3.
  - 13 Dates vary for this statue, from 480 BC through to the later decades of the century. In this volume Greco opts for a date not long after the Battle of Himera in 480 BC, but this might be too early considering the lowering of the date of the metopes from Temple E at Selinous. A date in the 460s BC would not be inappropriate for the youth. The style is a contradiction, with a head that appears to be later archaic poised on a severe style body. All this demonstrates how much we still have to learn about the styles evolving and emerging during the transition period during the early to mid decades of the 5th century BC.
  - 14 Barbanera 1995, 28, fig. 10.
  - 15 British Museum, GR 1873,0820.352.
  - 16 The sculptures from the west pediment were traditionally dated later than those from the east but the variations in their style and form might be due to different workshops rather than dates, one more conservative, the other more advanced in their practices. See Stewart 2008, 593–7, for a summary of the latest views on the date of the temple and its architectural sculptures.
  - 17 See Ohly 1976. For the fallen warrior see plates 64 and 71, and for the Herakles archer see plate 40 upper.
  - 18 Boschung *et al.* 1997, 155; Waywell 1978, 20. This hand-guide was specially prepared for use on the two four-day tours of collections of sculpture in English country houses preceding and following the XI International Congress of Classical Archaeology, London, 1978.
  - 19 For the Epidauros and Boston Amazons, see Yalouris 1992, 40–2 and 39, figs 9–10 respectively.

- 20 Barbanera 1995, 28, fig. 10.
- 21 Adornato 2003, 2–3, figs 5a–b.
- 22 Diodorus Siculus, *Histories*, Book 1 3.82.4.
- 23 See Stewart 2008, 597–8, for a summary of the temple and references.
- 24 Barbanera 1995, 78, figs 43–6 and 80, fig. 47.
- 25 Stewart 2008, 597.
- 26 See Buscemi 2016, 33–52.
- 27 For the Aigina sculptures, see Ohly 1976; for Olympia, see Younger and Rehak 2009, 41–105; and for the Parthenon, see Palagia 1998.
- 28 Diodorus Siculus, *Histories*, Book 11, 25.2–5.
- 29 The two main sources for the Battle of Himera are histories written by Herodotus (484–425 BC) and Diodorus Siculus, a Sicilian Greek (c. 60–30 BC). Although both sources claimed that Himera fell on the same day as a major battle against Xerxes’ Persians, Diodorus had it occur on the last day of the Battle of Thermopylai (*Histories*, Book 11, 24.1), while in *The Histories* (Book 7, 166. Herodotus wrote that the Sicilian Greeks defeated the Carthaginian army at Himera on the same day as the naval Battle of Salamis.

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## Chapter 9

# External Influences and Local Reinterpretations in the Production of Terracottas in Sicily between the 5th and 6th Century BC. A Case Study: The Head of Hades from Morgantina

Maria Lucia Ferruzza  
Museo archeologico 'Antonino Salinas',  
Palermo

One of the most salient aspects of Siceliot coroplastic production, which is noticeable through the variety of its iconographic, stylistic and religious themes, is the complex interaction between traditional forms and new imported models. This interaction involved both resistance and dynamic receptivity between different schools and regions. The now-inadequate historical categories developed by scholars based on a concept of centre and periphery, and once assigned to Greece and Sicily, have started to dissolve as a result of progress in research that favours a more pluralistic framework. In terms of the production of large terracotta sculpture the situation is more problematic because there is a general lack of surviving examples. But even more challenging is that in this specific field the workshops in each of the colonial '*poleis*' endeavoured to assert their peculiar identities, which resulted in distinctive cultural and religious systems. The figurative and iconographic models radiating out from workshops on the Greek mainland and islands on the one hand, and local indigenous contributions on the other, created innovative works and styles.<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, a terracotta male head from Morgantina poses some interesting questions and contributions to the field of coroplastic production in ancient Sicily (**Fig. 1**).<sup>2</sup>

This head of Hades derives from illicit excavations carried out over a period of 70 years in the sanctuary dedicated to Demeter and Kore at Morgantina. In 1985 it

**Figure 1** The Hades head from the Thesmophorion sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti (Morgantina). Archaeological Museum of Aidone, Enna (photo by: Riccardo Lombardo/REDA&CO/Universal Images Group via Getty Images)

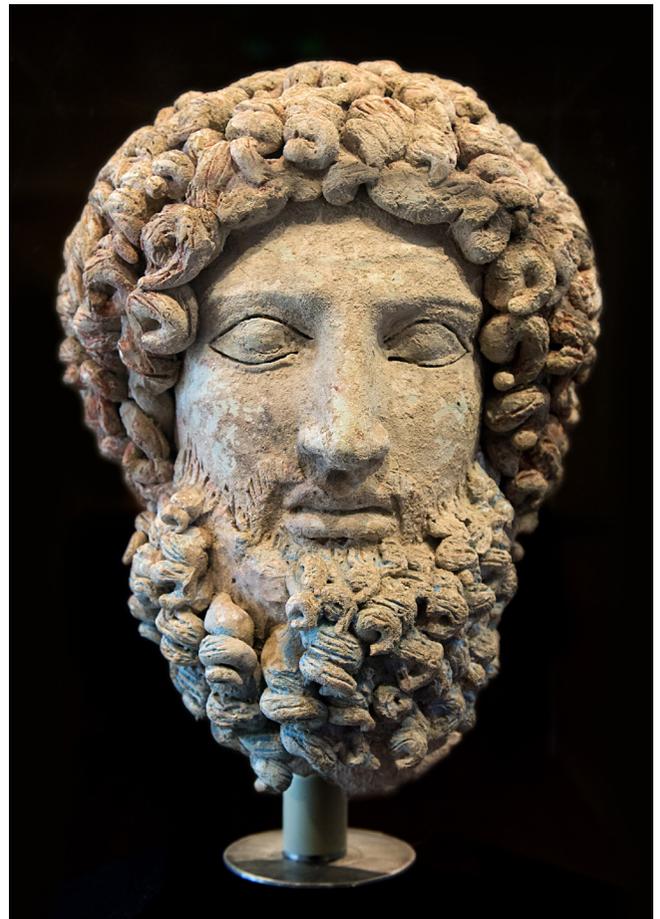




Figure 2 The area of San Francesco Bisconti's Thesmophorion (in red) (photo: Serena Raffiotta)

was sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, by the New York collector/dealer Maurice Templesman. He had acquired the head from Robin Symes, the antiquities dealer who had also been involved in the acquisition of the so-called 'Morgantina Goddess', a statue probably representing Demeter, and of a series of acrolithic statue fragments, all of which, according to later investigations, had been illegally excavated from the same site. Fortunately, the archaeological context of the head of Hades was confirmed by the discovery of numerous fragments of terracotta statues in the area of sacellum B in San Francesco Bisconti at Morgantina. Among the pieces of drapery and limbs, broken from large-scale sculptures, there were a number of spiral curls that were found to join with gaps in the beard and hair of the head in Los Angeles. The examination, conducted by members of the Getty's Antiquities Conservation Department and the Assessorato Regionale dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana, confirmed the head's provenance as being from the San Francesco Bisconti sanctuary. As a result the terracotta head was approved for deaccession in 2014 and returned to Sicily in January 2016, where it now resides in the Archaeological Museum of Aidone (Enna).<sup>3</sup>

The most important shrine dedicated to the goddesses Demeter and Persephone in Morgantina was the extramural sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti, which was occupied and in use over a long period of time between the 6th and 3rd centuries BC. It comprised a number of ritual *sacella* and *naiskoi* constructed on artificial terraces cut into the hillside (Figs 2–3).<sup>4</sup> This same sanctuary was also the original context for the statue of 'Demeter' that was returned from the Getty, as well as the remains of the two acrolithic sculptures: heads, hands and feet belonging to seated statues of Demeter and Persephone. They were returned to Sicily from Maurice Templesman via the University of Virginia and are now also exhibited in the Archaeological Museum in Aidone.<sup>5</sup>

The terracotta head highlighted in this paper is characterised by a voluminous beard and a thick head of hair, consisting of separately made, spiralling curls that were applied before firing. The almond-shaped eyes have been defined by deep incisions and the eyelids are indicated by a



Figure 3 *Sacella* in the upper terrace (photo: Serena Raffiotta)

light swelling. The nose is straight and the lips fleshy. When complete, the intensity of the modelling, the severe facial features and the abstract quality of the pigments would have enhanced the dramatic epiphany of the god. As the jagged neck line indicates, the head was broken from a larger figure, very probably a full-length statue. An image of a male deity in a Thesmophorion sanctuary supports its identification as Hades, *paredros* of Persephone, a goddess central to the myth and cult of her mother Demeter and of primary importance in ancient Sicilian worship. Interestingly, a terracotta female head, which also appeared on the antiquities market, wears a *polos* (a symbol of Demeter and Persephone) and shares the same characteristic facial features, technique and scale as the head of Hades: both heads might have come from the same workshop and context.<sup>6</sup>

The design and structure of the architectural complex in the San Francesco Bisconti sanctuary, and the dedication and positioning of the votive offerings there, all allude to the cult of Persephone and Demeter. They were the goddesses who safeguarded agricultural fertility, female fecundity, and women's roles as brides and mothers. In this context, the abduction of Kore (Persephone), her marriage to Hades, and her cyclical return to earth (the *kathados* and *anados*) on which the flourishing of nature depends were understood by the worshippers as the model of mortal marriage, closely intertwined with life and death, and with female and natural bounty.<sup>7</sup>

Hades's iconography is generally quite problematic, however, and can involve interpretive ambiguities. Instead of there being distinctive physiognomic features to assist in any identification over images of other older, bearded gods, certain distinguishing elements can suggest that it is the god of the Underworld who is being represented: an enthroned position next to a *paredra*, a half-face representation, visual allusions to the realm of the Underworld, or the presence of a cornucopia, snake or Kerberos. There is a paucity of male terracotta figures produced by coroplasts in Sicily and representations of Hades are no exception. But at Morgantina the god has been recognised in a small group of large-scale statuettes from sanctuary deposits. They represent a young, beardless male, standing and wrapped in a himation that covers the legs, all dating to the third

century BC. The figures sometimes wear the characteristic wreath worn by bridegrooms and one of them holds a turquoise snake, a typical attribute of a chthonic deity.<sup>8</sup> Hades and Persephone are also the main characters in scenes shown on a series of terracotta *pinakes* dedicated as *anathemata* in the sanctuary of Persephone at Mannella, near Locri in Reggio Calabria. They date primarily from the period 490–450 BC and show various episodes of the myth and the rituals celebrated in honour of the goddess. On the *pinakes*, the god Hades plays the dual role of Kore's abductor and Persephone's bridegroom in the Underworld. (The name Kore is usually associated with the goddess when she functions as goddess of the earth and its fertility; the name Persephone refers more to her role as queen of the Underworld.) The first subject is represented in different iconographical variants, and Hades is identified with certainty only as an adult with a full beard and curly or wavy hair.<sup>9</sup>

Even more interesting are the *pinakes* decorated with scenes of the so-called unveiling group, which have Hades and Persephone, enthroned as queen and king of the Underworld, in a royal, solemn attitude, like two *simulacra*, receiving offerings from other deities. In such images Hades sports a long beard and moustache, and his hair is tied up with a ribbon, wreathed with leaves or adorned with a diadem (Fig. 4).<sup>10</sup>

Another group of *pinakes* is also useful for any hypothetical reconstruction of the head. They were discovered in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Francavilla di Sicilia, a town that in the 5th century BC was under the political influence of Syracuse. In this group, mostly derived from Locrian prototypes, the abduction scene recurs with Hades and Persephone represented as a divine couple on a quadriga. They belong with a group of images showing the legend in which Persephone appears



Figure 4 Hades and Persephone enthroned on a *pinax* from the Persephoneion in Locri, 490–460 BC. Museo archeologico nazionale di Reggio Calabria

resigned to her fate and does not protest or struggle. There are also scenes depicting the divine couple enthroned in their roles as sovereigns of the Underworld, alone or with other deities. In the epiphany group the two heads are depicted in silhouette, detached from any other distracting detail, in order to underscore the essentially abstract and

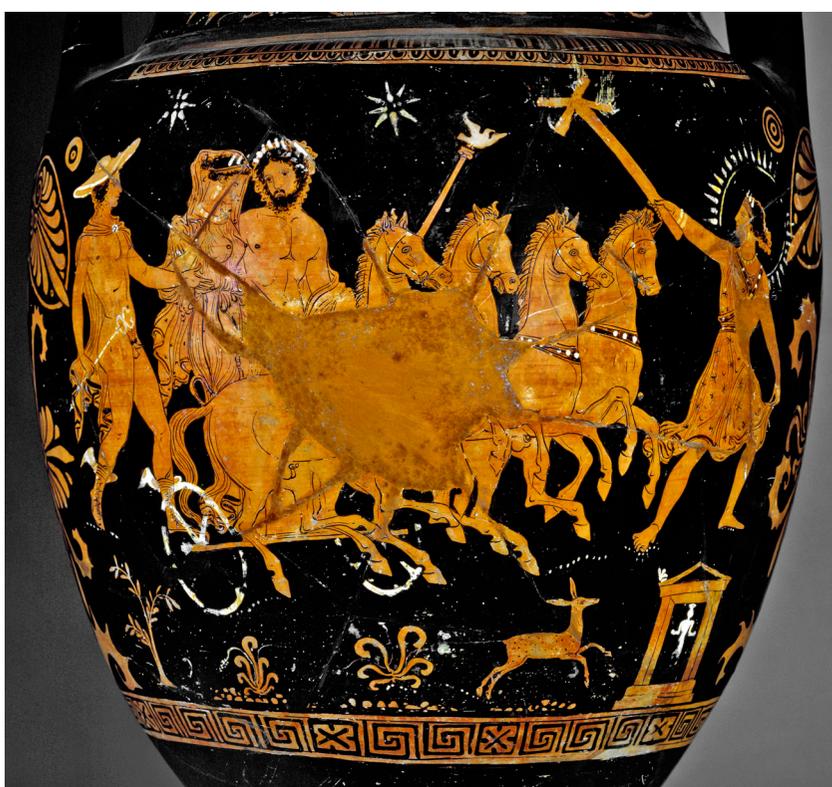


Figure 5 Apulian red-figured volute krater by the Iliupersis Painter, 350 BC. British Museum, 1885,0314.1



Figure 6 The necropolis of Aigai at Vergina: tomb of Persephone, mid-4th century BC



Figure 7 Detail of Hades' head

solemn values of the image.<sup>11</sup> In the Francavilla *pinakes* Hades is, to some extent, represented in the canonical fashion, but with auxiliary and peculiar details, alluding to those *epikleseis* that help identify the deity. For example, the wreath or garland, probably of roses, refers to Zeus Katachthonios, who is also assimilated with Hades in his role as sovereign of the Underworld, or to Zeus Meilichios, who was associated with rites of expiation and purification. On some *pinakes* Hades is also visually assimilated with Zeus Eleutherios by his holding of an eagle-headed sceptre and his wearing of a garland of oak leaves.<sup>12</sup>

Hades and Persephone regularly featured on south Italian red-figured painted pottery of the 4th century BC. On a volute krater of about 360 BC by the Iliupersis Painter, now in the British Museum, Hades and Persephone are mounted on a quadriga in a scene that shows the goddess being abducted without a struggle (Fig. 5). In other interpretations of the story the divine king and queen of the Underworld are depicted either seated or standing inside a *naiskos* surrounded by various mythological figures, as demonstrated by a scene on another volute krater, housed in the Getty Museum, and attributed to the White Saccos Painter, dated around 340 BC. The scene on this pot illustrates the revival of the type showing two enthroned deities, lacking the pathos of the 'rape' that is seen on the *pinakes*.<sup>13</sup>

Interest in the motive for the abduction of Persephone emerges around the middle of the 4th century BC. From this period we hear from ancient texts about two lost, but probably significant, works representing the theme: a statue group carved and dedicated by the sculptor Praxiteles and a painting by Nikomachos, who is also often assigned as the painter of the famous scene that gives its name to the so-called Tomb of Persephone in the necropolis at Vergina in Macedonia. Incidentally, Macedonia was a region with deep-rooted cultural and religious connections with Apulia and Sicily.<sup>14</sup> At Vergina the artist has painted the scene of the rape of Kore using rapid, vibrant brushstrokes. The goddess is surprisingly naked, which, although extremely rare, exposes

the victim's vulnerability and therefore humanity and so enhances the dramatic nature of the scene (Figs 6–7). Also from Vergina is a marble throne discovered in the royal tomb of Eurydike, dated to around 340 BC. An extraordinary painting, realised without a preparatory drawing, was executed on its rear. Hades and Persephone stand on a quadriga, facing towards the viewer, like an epiphany, all on a blue background. Hades holds the horses' reins in his left hand and a sceptre in his right, while Persephone raises her hand to pull her veil in a gesture characteristic of other versions of the scene and of a bride.<sup>15</sup>

Returning to the head of Hades from Morgantina, we cannot exclude the possibility that the other fragments of large-scale terracotta figures found in sacellum B of the Thesmophorion at San Francesco Bisconti belonged to an accompanying figure. If so, then we might restore a 'divine pair', perhaps Hades and Persephone. Such a reconstruction would fit in with their traditional iconographical typology, following comparanda on paintings, pottery and coroplastic media dating from the 5th and 4th centuries BC. An analysis of the physiognomic and stylistic components of the head allows us to assign it to a number of works that derive from the post-Pheidian, Attic tradition of sculptural forms. These are sometimes characterised by their colouristic effects. This male type, defined by the dense mass of hair and voluminous beard, was adopted for a diverse array of deities, including Dionysos, Hades, Sarapis and Zeus, principally during the 4th century BC, a period when cross-contamination between iconographic types was relatively common. In the rare representations of Hades, he often shares traits with Zeus, especially when the latter god adopts a chthonic function and meaning in his cult and image: Zeus Meilichios or Zeus Katachthonios were linked with the sphere of natural fertility. A statue of Zeus Katachthonios, dated between 440 and 430 BC, is known to have been made by the sculptor Agorakritos, and some believe that this was the prototype of the so-called Dresden Zeus, a statue characterised by the intense chiaroscuro tones of the hair and beard.<sup>16</sup> Another possible Roman version of a Greek

original by either Agorakritos or his contemporary Alkamenes is a fragmentary sculpture identified as Hades, now in the Palazzo Altemps in Rome. This statue has a voluminous beard with long curls, a moustache, deep-sunken eyes creating a gloomy expression and fleshy lips.<sup>17</sup> Both Agorakritos and Alkamenes were sculptors of the circle of Pheidias, and were possibly his pupils. Spiralling curls and a full head of richly modelled hair were also the main features of the colossal statue of Sarapis by Bryaxis sculpted in the second half of the 4th century BC for the god's temple in Alexandria. Sarapis was a product of the syncretism between the Egyptian Osiride-Apis and the Greek Zeus-Hades. According to the controversial description by Clemente Alessandrino, Sarapis was seated on a throne with a sceptre in one hand, while the other rested on the central head of Kerberos. The nude part of Sarapis's body had a bluish tint, a shade associated with the Underworld nature of the god.<sup>18</sup>

With these comparanda in mind, we can place our head chronologically within an iconographic line of development that begins with the post-Pheidian tradition, continues through the Zeus of Dresden and a marble head of Zeus from Cyrene, which is related in style and form to the Dresden type. Finally, there are parallels to be sought in middle-Italic and Etruscan contexts in a number of terracotta bearded heads, such as one from Falerii, dated to the 4th century BC, or another from the south-east of Palatine in Rome. These examples reflect the persistence of an iconographic tradition, with the earliest points of reference being Athenian prototypes of the late 5th and 4th centuries BC, which influenced generations of artists over time. This iconographic tradition was reinterpreted across the Mediterranean in various Greek and other workshops through different expressive media.<sup>19</sup>

Given the absence of comparable male terracotta sculptures and the lack of an archaeological context, it is difficult to narrow down the date of the head of Hades from Morgantina. Some stylistic features and the general facial structure seem to be related to works of the late 5th century BC, but these elements could also represent a stylistic legacy revived in the second half of the 4th century BC. This was the Age of Timoleon, a period of great revival for Morgantina and its sanctuaries when Syracusan models, which in turn were influenced by Alexandrian types, dominated artistic production in Greek Sicily. During the Age of Timoleon there was a general revival of classical motifs, especially in religious sculpture. The renaissance of earlier styles and types connected these new sculptures with a glorious historical and political past.<sup>20</sup>

The most distinctive feature in the definition of the face is the incised groove that outlines the eyes, a technical feature that also occurs in a number of fictile heads dating from the 6th century BC produced in 'Magna Graecia' and Sicily. Examples include a 6th-century head from Agrigento, a large head of a female deity from Medma and a number of protomes from Locri, where the delineation of the eyes through incision appears to have been fairly common after the clay sculpture was removed from the mould. The same detail is also found in other contexts and environments, as an Etruscan female head from the Campetti votive deposit at Veio demonstrates.<sup>21</sup>

It is possible that the eyes and the surrounding incisions on this piece were painted in order to give the face greater expressive intensity. On the other hand, it seems doubtful that eyelashes in bronze or any other material were inserted into the incision. This practice was more common on marble sculptures, as found on a female head from the sanctuary of Hera Lacinia in Crotona and a marble head from Metaponto, although metal ornaments such as earrings did often decorate terracotta heads and votive busts.<sup>22</sup> Alternatively, the incisions might have been left hollow to create an effect of darkness, to evoke the gloomy aspect of the god of the Underworld, his eyes devoid of colour and gaze. According to the etymology the name Hades was derived from the prefix *h-* and the root *id-* 'to see', meaning Hades the gloomy, the 'oscuro', which is controversial but already known in antiquity.

There is more evidence for the colour of the beard, the pigment for which was Egyptian blue according to microchemical analysis. This colour was clearly symbolic in meaning; blue was emblematic of eternity, for it resembled the colour of the sky, as well as being indicative of power and worth. From the Homeric age and, according to a convention deriving from Egyptian and Middle Eastern traditions, the colour blue signified the gods and was used in literature for its evocative and poetic connotations, especially in relation to Poseidon, Dionysos and Hades. In fact, blue is only used for the representation of mortals when the subject is already dead or transfiguring through the intervention of a god.<sup>23</sup>

## Notes

- Adornato 2011.
- Ferruzza 2016, 209–13; Raffiotta 2014.
- For the fragments from the sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti and the curls, see Raffiotta 2007, 98–110, 124–5, nos 138–40, pl. 27.
- Greco 2009, 403–15; Greco 2015; Caruso 2013, 52–3; Raffiotta 2012, 39–67.
- Greco 2007, 10–15; Marconi 2007, 4–9; and Greco 2008, 12–15. For the acroliths, Marconi 2008, 2–21; Maniscalco 2018.
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- Greco 2013, 50–65.
- Bell 1981, 88–91, 98–103, nos 295–9.
- Lissi Caronna, Sabbione and Vlad Borrelli 1996–9, 4th series, part 1, 1, no. 2, 216–22 (group 2, types 2/1); and 1, no. 3 (groups 2/18, 2/19, 2/22, 2/30), 740–5, 764–77, 877–91.
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- Spigo 2000, type XVI, 33–5, 47–8; Albertocchi 2012, 142–61.
- Spigo 2000, type XVI.1, 34–5, 48 and n. 105; type XVII, 38–9.
- Linders 1988; Pensa 1977, 61–6, pls I–V.
- Andronikos 1984, 523–36.
- Kottaridi 2007, 38–44.
- Todisco 1993, 40, fig. 12.
- De Angelis D'Ossat 2002, 62.
- Kater-Sibbes 1973; Hornbostel 1973, 3, n. 2.
- Moreno 2001, 92–4; for the heads from Faleri, see Cristofani 1988, 37–55; for the head from the Palatine, see Pensabene 2001, 81–103.

- 20 Portale 2000, 265–82; Raffiotta 2007, 118; Portale 2008, 55–6.
- 21 Pugliese Carratelli 1996, 673, no. 62; for the deity from Medma, see Catoni and Settis 2008, 319, no. 17; for the protomes from Locri, see Barra Bagnasco 1986, 29–30, pl. III. This detail appears also in stone sculpture, as shown in the 5th-century BC marble head from the sanctuary of Apollo Lykaios in Metaponto, see Pugliese Carratelli 1990, 300, 453–4.
- 22 Spadea 1996, 85–7; see also the head of Athena from Magna Graecia dated to the beginning of the 5th century BC, in Catoni and Settis 2008, 327, no. 39.
- 23 Luzzatto and Pompas 1988, 127–51; Drew Griffith 2005, 329–34. For the chthonic value of blue, consider Bell 1981, no. 297, and for the statues of Sirens in the Serapeion of Memphis in Saqqara, datable to the 3rd century BC, which show blue plumage, see Lauer and Picard 1955, 216–27.

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# Chapter 10

## Making Sense of Epigraphic Culture in Ancient Sicily

Jonathan R.W. Prag  
University of Oxford

### Introduction

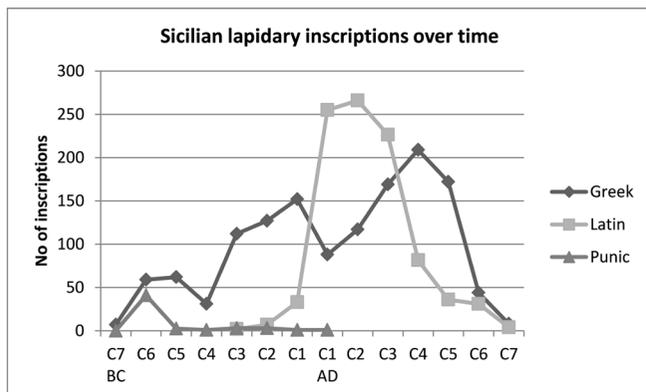
Sicily's oft-noted place at the 'crossroads' of the ancient Mediterranean can be observed in many diverse aspects of its culture. It is the aim of this paper very briefly to illustrate the extent to which this is no less true of the epigraphic culture of the island. Epigraphy is the practice of writing, that is engraving, texts on more or less durable materials (such as stone, metal or ceramic), and as a cultural practice was widespread, if far from universal, in the ancient Mediterranean. Inscribed texts are particularly valuable as a contemporary first-hand source of evidence for the use of individual languages in a region, even if they can never be treated as a straightforwardly transparent source of evidence for contemporary spoken language (the continued modern use of, for example, Latin, in engraved stone texts should suffice to illustrate the point).<sup>1</sup>

A prerequisite to the study of this material is the ability to assess the available data as a whole, and traditionally this has been something of a challenge for Sicily, due to the existing state of publication and the complexity of the material. The island was the subject of several early collections and was one of the first regions to be treated by the Berlin-based corpora projects of *Inscriptiones Graecae* (vol. XIV, 1893) and *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (vol. X, 1888).<sup>2</sup> However, the majority of archaeological work on the island post-dates those publications, and most of the more recent material has been published in very diverse locations, or else remained unpublished. The basis for this survey is a new and developing digital corpus of Sicilian epigraphy (principally on stone), *I.Sicily* (<http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk>), about which further information can be found online at <https://isicily.org>.<sup>3</sup>

### Epigraphic culture in ancient Sicily

It is traditional to insist upon the relative epigraphic poverty of ancient Sicily compared to other parts of the ancient Mediterranean. However, this insistence looks increasingly overstated. A working estimate for the number of inscriptions on stone from ancient Sicily might now be approximately 5,000, equivalent to around 200 inscriptions / 1000km<sup>2</sup>, which compares very favourably with the general, if unsatisfactory, figures that have been generated in the past for other areas of the Roman Empire, even if still falling far short of key regions such as Latium, Campania or parts of the Greek East.<sup>4</sup> The discussion that follows makes extensive use of 'quasi-statistics', which can only be impressionistic, since the available data is the result of accidents of survival, recovery and publication, and however comprehensive undoubtedly remains skewed (some of the reasons for which will be noted where relevant). The figures used here are derived from the available data set of over 3,200 lapidary texts currently recorded (and freely accessible and available for download) in *I.Sicily*.<sup>5</sup>

Sicilian epigraphic culture begins in the archaic period, a little after the earliest evidence for the use of writing (in Greek and Phoenician) elsewhere in the central Mediterranean. The earliest Sicilian epigraphy is in Greek, closely followed by Phoenician/Punic as well as limited material produced in the indigenous languages of Sikel and Elymian (the distinct existence of Sikan as a language



**Figure 1** Frequency of Greek, Latin and Punic lapidary epigraphy in Sicily over time (other minor languages are omitted). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016,  $n = 2,352$  dated inscriptions out of a total of 3,231 recorded stones. Data analysis and visualisation was aided by Daniel's XL Toolbox addin for Excel, version 7.1.4, by Daniel Kraus, Würzburg, Germany ([www.xltoolbox.net](http://www.xltoolbox.net))

appears increasingly problematic<sup>6</sup>). As a practice epigraphy follows on from the arrival of Greek and Phoenician settlers on the island, although with a delay of a century or more from their first arrival: lapidary epigraphy in general could be argued to be one possible proxy for the development of urbanisation. Across the full span of classical antiquity, from the 7th century BC to the 7th century AD, some two-thirds of all Sicilian lapidary epigraphy is in Greek. The main quantitative and qualitative growth in Sicilian epigraphy begins in the Hellenistic period (4th century BC onwards), with a further and more substantial increase in the period of the High Empire (1st/2nd century AD). Latin epigraphy on the island is concentrated in the first three centuries AD, during which period it rapidly predominates. The epigraphic use of Greek, however, persists right through the Roman period and by late antiquity in purely numerical terms Greek inscriptions return to the fore (**Fig. 1**). Notwithstanding Apuleius's famous 2nd-century reference to the *Siculi trilingues*, which is usually assumed to imply the persistence of Punic alongside Greek and Latin, by the Roman period the epigraphic evidence shows only Greek and Latin in use.<sup>7</sup> The other epigraphically attested languages, both immigrant and indigenous (Sikel, Elymian, Punic, Oscan), are almost completely absent by the end of the Hellenistic period. In seeking to define epigraphic practice in late antiquity the data becomes especially problematic for any form of quasi-statistical presentation, since the material is overwhelmingly concentrated in the 1,000-plus inscriptions from the catacombs of ancient Syracuse (itself predominantly Greek). As a cultural practice, epigraphy fades rapidly from sight during the 6th and 7th centuries AD.

This basic set of patterns can be teased apart in greater detail, as illustrated in the following paragraphs. It is important, however, to reiterate the point that epigraphy is not a simple proxy for actual language use, and the emphasis throughout this discussion remains upon the culture of inscribing, with greater or lesser monumentality. At the same time, the implied reliance on statistics in such a discussion should not be given excessive weight. Almost all study of antiquity is hampered by the limited survival of evidence: even when all the surviving evidence has been

collected, it remains a problematic and incomplete data set. The tendency to build arguments upon individual, often exceptional, examples or anecdotes is no less – and probably more – problematic, and such examples require firm contextualisation. The perhaps excessive focus upon statistical analysis here is motivated by the relatively complete access to data compared to previous studies, and so is implicitly an argument in favour of a comprehensive corpus project such as *I.Sicily*. However, in reality such a corpus is only a first step in the undertaking of more systematic analysis of, for example, linguistic patterns, as exemplified in the work of Kalle Korhonen for several of the cities of imperial Sicily,<sup>8</sup> but which might just as readily be extended to other aspects of epigraphic culture, such as monumentality and material context.

### Archaic/classical Sicily

It is possible to draw a fairly clear distinction between the epigraphy of archaic/classical Sicily and subsequent periods: the justification for doing so rests on the one hand in differences in patterns of epigraphic culture, and on the other in an apparent gap in epigraphic practice broadly attributable to the 4th century BC.<sup>9</sup> The earliest Sicilian epigraphy belongs to the very end of the 7th century BC. The epigraphy of Sicily in the 7th to 5th centuries BC (at least 180 stones, to which must be added a significant body of material on ceramic and metal, not yet systematically catalogued) has a relatively limited geographical distribution, concentrated in the southern half of the island: the two primary centres of production are the Greek foundation of Selinus and the Phoenician foundation of Motya (**Fig. 2**).<sup>10</sup> Archaic lapidary epigraphy on the island is principally restricted to funerary and votive epigraphy (**Fig. 3**). The high volume of recorded material from Selinus and Motya is due to votive practices in sanctuaries (and in turn may reflect unusual material survival at major sites which were not reoccupied later), although the majority of material at Selinus and elsewhere is funerary, which fits the common profile of epigraphic culture in antiquity more generally. Occasional instances of building inscriptions appear to be confined to religious buildings, such as the text on the steps of the temple of Apollo at Syracuse: arguably texts of this sort merge into the category of dedication.<sup>11</sup> The clearest example of a monumental public text that does not fall into either of these categories is one of the mere handful of surviving Sikel lapidary inscriptions (a language showing affinities to the Sabellic languages of Italy, attested in south-east Sicily in the 6th and 5th centuries BC, and which employs the Greek alphabet when written), from the gateway of the ancient site at Mendolito near Adrano.<sup>12</sup> As yet, the other Sicilian indigenous language, Elymian, from the western part of the island, has not produced any monumental epigraphy, only texts on ceramic.<sup>13</sup> Texts in this period are almost entirely engraved on the relatively poor local stone: Sicily has some good-quality limestone (although less so in the west of the island), but no natural marble (**Fig. 4**). Only five texts are known to me from the archaic period on (imported) marble, one each from Selinus, Gela, Naxos and Akrai, together with an inscribed kouros from Megara Hyblaea.<sup>14</sup>



Figure 2 Distribution of lapidary inscriptions across Sicily in all languages (7th–5th century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 179. Map prepared using Tableau Public 10.1, with a map base from OpenStreetMap

### Hellenistic Sicily

Although the material that can confidently be dated to the 4th century is exiguous (perhaps *c.* 25 texts), it already begins to show some indications of the shifting patterns of practice that become clear in the Hellenistic period, with the appearance of more monumental and higher-quality texts and a wider geographical distribution.<sup>15</sup> Considering the Hellenistic period as a whole (4th to 1st centuries BC), several clear trends emerge from the lapidary material (a minimum of 435 texts). The first is a steady increase in the number of inscriptions from the 4th to the 1st centuries. Secondly, texts are overwhelmingly in Greek, with only a handful of Punic texts in the west, a small body of Oscan texts from 3rd-century Messina (produce of the Italic mercenaries who seized the city *c.* 289 BC) and a gradual, but small intrusion of Latin in the second half of the period (*c.* 20 texts, see **Fig. 1**). Thirdly, lapidary inscriptions are now attested right across the island, in clear contrast to the south-eastern and south-western focus of activity in the earlier period (**Fig. 5**). Although it remains the case that there is a concentration of material in the coastal urban centres, the penetration into the eastern (plain of Catania and the Hyblaean plateau) and western interiors of the island is clear, as is the adoption of epigraphy in the urbanising centres of the north coast where earlier colonisation was rare.<sup>16</sup> Fourthly, the variety in the types of text being inscribed also increases (**Fig. 6**). Funerary epigraphy constitutes just over 50 per cent of this material, which is significantly less than the more typical situation both in Sicily and elsewhere where funerary epigraphy tends to constitute *c.* 75 per cent of surviving material.<sup>17</sup> Dedications make up another 15 per cent, but the rest is a very disparate body of public epigraphy, including decrees, building inscriptions and other euergetic texts, public accounts, lists of various sorts, and above all honorifics (slightly over 10 per cent). Fifthly, the diversity of materials employed also increases (**Fig. 7**), especially the use of higher-quality stone, whether carefully sourced Sicilian stone (higher-quality limestones, such as so-called ‘*pietra di Taormina*’, or the red brescia from the area around San

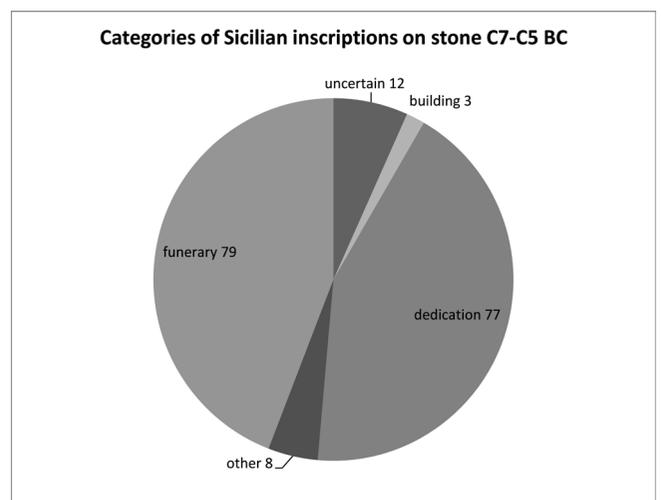
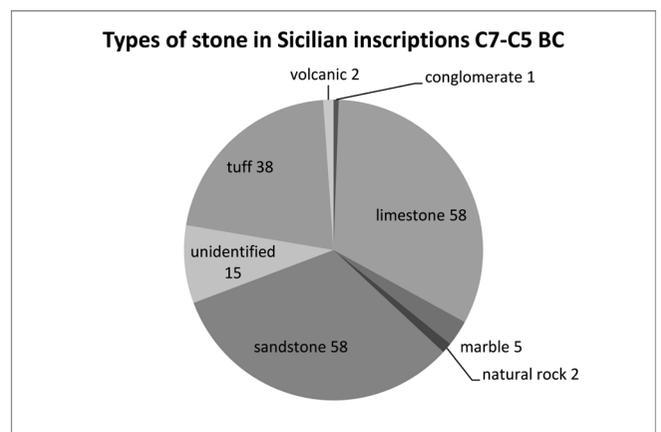
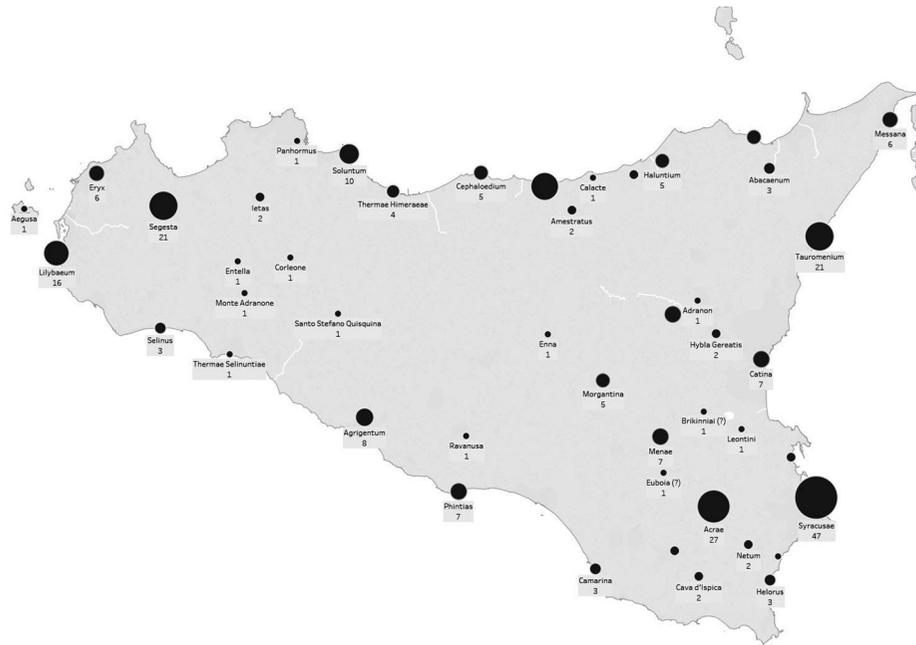


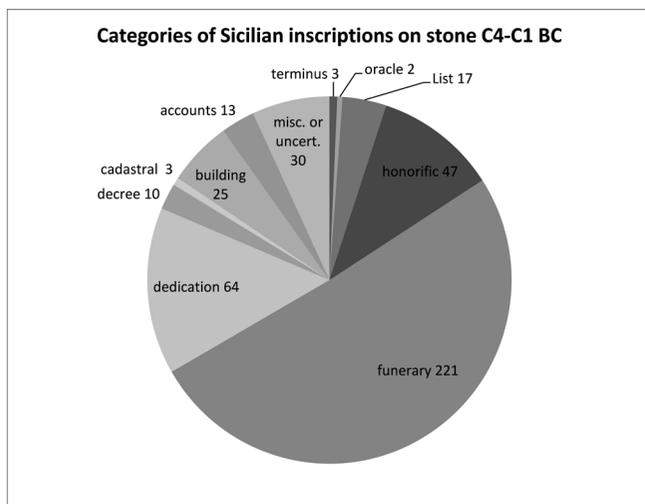
Figure 3 Types of inscription on stone in Sicily (7th–5th century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 179. Data analysis and visualisation was aided by Daniel’s XL Toolbox addin for Excel, version 7.1.4, by Daniel Kraus, Würzburg, Germany ([www.xltoolbox.net](http://www.xltoolbox.net))

Figure 4 Types of stone used for inscriptions in Sicily (7th–5th century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 179. Data analysis and visualisation was aided by Daniel’s XL Toolbox addin for Excel, version 7.1.4, by Daniel Kraus, Würzburg, Germany ([www.xltoolbox.net](http://www.xltoolbox.net))



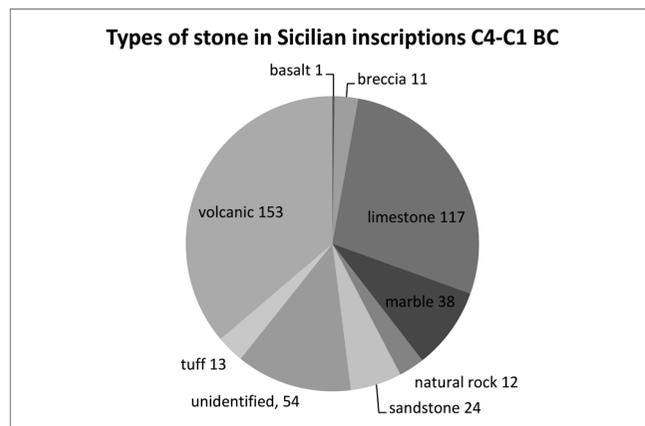


**Figure 5** Distribution of lapidary inscriptions across Sicily in all languages (4th–1st century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 279 (data from Lipara omitted). Map prepared using Tableau Public 10.1, with a map base from OpenStreetMap



**Figure 6** Types of inscription on stone in Sicily (4th–1st century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 435. Data analysis and visualisation was aided by Daniel's XL Toolbox addin for Excel, version 7.1.4, by Daniel Kraus, Würzburg, Germany ([www.xltoolbox.net](http://www.xltoolbox.net))

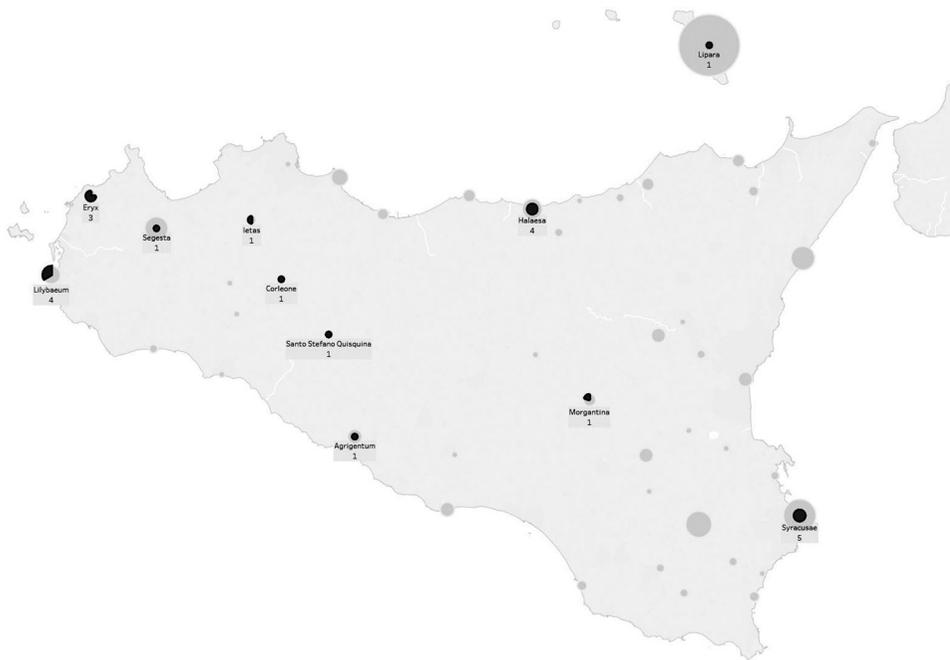
**Figure 7** Types of stone used for inscriptions in Sicily (4th–1st century BC). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 423. Data analysis and visualisation was aided by Daniel's XL Toolbox addin for Excel, version 7.1.4, by Daniel Kraus, Würzburg, Germany ([www.xltoolbox.net](http://www.xltoolbox.net))



Marco d'Alunzio), or more expensive imported marbles (which make up almost 10 per cent).<sup>18</sup> The increased use of volcanic stone (black basaltic lava stone) reflects the increased epigraphic practice in the areas around Mount Etna and the Lipari islands, where it is the dominant local material.

Hellenistic texts in Sicily are notoriously difficult to date, but without doubt the quantity of material increases substantially in the 2nd century BC. It is clear that this expansion of public epigraphy goes hand in hand with the increasing monumentalisation of the urban centres of Sicily:<sup>19</sup> the development of monumental agorai and the associated display of honorific statuary and epigraphy has been well discussed recently for the cases of Segesta and Halaesa in particular, and this is the period when honorific texts especially become more widespread.<sup>20</sup> However, this is also the point when the epigraphic display of public documents as monuments in their own right emerges. Most significant in this respect are the cadastral text from Halaesa and the account inscriptions from Tauromenion, as well as the magistrate lists and other texts from Akrai.<sup>21</sup>

All of this could be considered typical Hellenistic practice, and belongs within a wider set of socio-cultural developments on the island and beyond;<sup>22</sup> but the extent to which Sicilian epigraphic culture also illustrates its own distinctive traits must be emphasised. This is most obvious linguistically: Sicilian Greek as evidenced in the epigraphy remains strongly and distinctively Doric. As Susan Mimbrera has noted, 'There are practically no inscriptions entirely in *koine* until the end of the Hellenistic period', and Cicero felt obliged to quote Sicilian Doricisms for his Roman audience (*proagoras* and *anexia*).<sup>23</sup> Sicilian epigraphy of this period also produces instances of near unique practice suggesting a considerable cultural independence (although also suggesting connections, for example, with the western Greek mainland): unusual relief and polychrome inscribed texts offer two examples of this;<sup>24</sup> the relatively extensive use of bronze is a third.<sup>25</sup>



**Figure 8** Distribution of Latin inscriptions across Sicily (4th–1st century BC). Locations with Latin inscriptions are highlighted and labelled; the presence of texts in other languages is indicated in pale grey (compare Fig. 5). Data from *I. Sicily*, as of 22 June 2016; n = 23/433 (2 from Melita excluded). Map prepared using Tableau Public 10.1, with a map base from OpenStreetMap

### Roman Sicily

The first formal Roman presence on Sicily came in 264 BC with the crossing of Roman forces to the island.<sup>26</sup> A Roman magistrate was regularly present in the west of the island from at least 227 BC, and the entire island passed under Roman control with the sack of Syracuse in 212 BC. The earliest Latin epigraphy is contemporary with this process: a milestone from near Corleone in the west, probably of 252 BC, and a 3rd-century dedication to Apollo, probably from Halaesa on the north coast.<sup>27</sup> However, the quantity of pre-Augustan Latin epigraphy is tiny (*c.* 20), especially if one considers the fact that Sicily was a pacified *provincia*, in very close proximity to the Italian peninsula and with a substantial Italian presence on the island.<sup>28</sup>

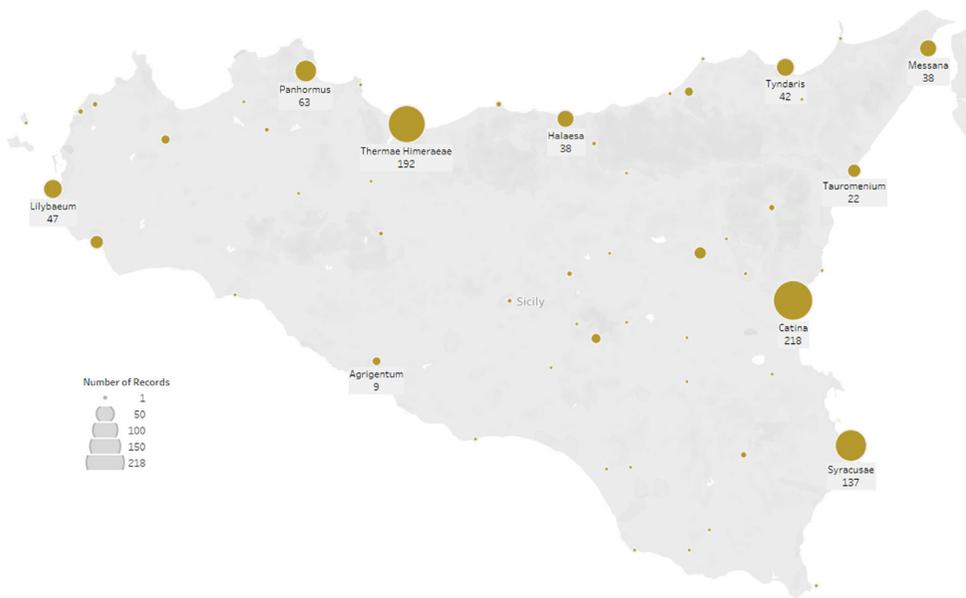
The Latin epigraphy of Republican Sicily shows several very clear patterns. Firstly, with the obvious exception of Syracuse, seat of the Roman governor, the texts come almost entirely from the western part of the island (**Fig. 8**): this might reflect the apparently more mixed ethnicities of the western half of the island, the quantitatively weaker epigraphic culture in this region, or an earlier Roman/Italian presence and the trading links between western Sicily, north Africa and Italy.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, in almost all cases where the text survives sufficiently to allow us to tell, the Latin texts were erected by Romans. The occasional texts erected by Roman magistrates are in Latin,<sup>30</sup> but honours for Roman magistrates, of which there are more, are all in Greek (the solitary exception, honours for a Scipio at Halaesa, was not erected by Sicilians at all, but by immigrant *Italici*).<sup>31</sup> Thirdly, many of the Latin texts offer clear examples of linguistic interference, generally suggestive of the dominant influence of the local Greek linguistic and epigraphic culture.<sup>32</sup> For example, the *Italici* honorific just mentioned and a fragmentary text of *c.* 100 BC from the area of the so-called Oratory of Phalaris in Agrigentum both employ the Greek use of the accusative for the honorand.<sup>33</sup> The very occasional instances of Latin funerary inscriptions from the end of this period also suggest

the dominant influence of local Greek epigraphic culture.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, the presence of Italians and Romans is clearly attested onomastically in the Greek epigraphy of the island.<sup>35</sup> Overall, this pattern of a dominant Greek Sicilian epigraphic culture persists through to the Augustan period.

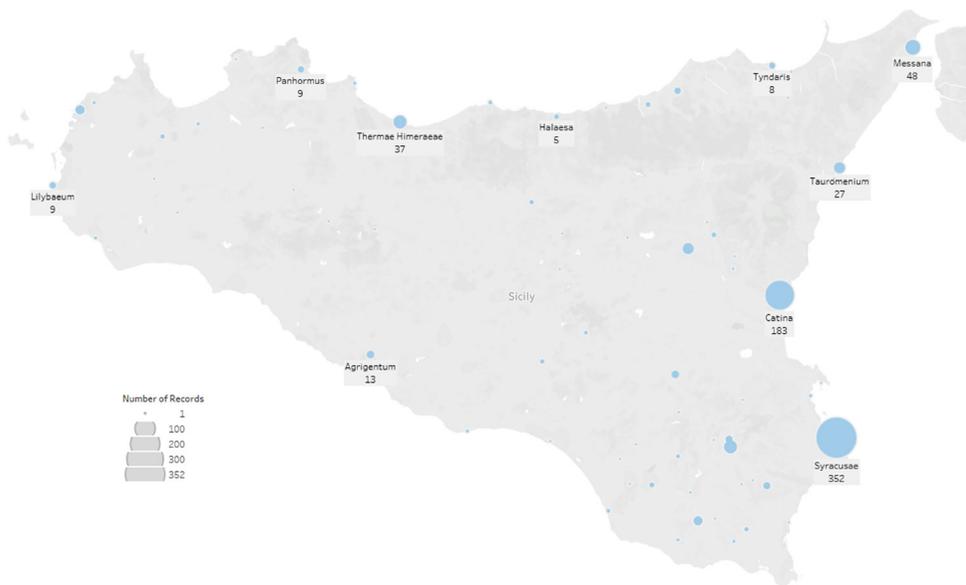
During the later 1st century BC a number of Greek texts illustrate the increasing presence of Rome: for example, the last two of the Taormina financial inscriptions use the Roman calendar and other elements, while calques of Latin terms such as *municipium* and *duumvir* occur in various locations.<sup>36</sup> Olga Tribulato has observed that ‘the Greek calques from Latin are clearly limited to the sphere of public life and administration, while those from Greek reflect a more varied interaction. We may speculate on whether borrowing from Latin was not in fact passive rather than active.’<sup>37</sup> From the Augustan period onwards, Latin epigraphy rapidly takes over, clearly contemporary with the imposition of Roman *coloniae* by Augustus in 36/21 BC and the extension of Latin rights to many of the other communities.<sup>38</sup>

A detailed analysis of the shifts in the epigraphic culture of the island over the following seven centuries remains a desideratum, and only a few key points will be highlighted here.<sup>39</sup>

One thing in particular stands out from the plot of the Latin inscriptions during the period of the Roman Empire (**Fig. 9**). The *coloniae* created in the Augustan period were Syracuse, Catina, Tauromenium, Tyndaris, Thermae Himeraeae and Panhormus (although there is a slight dispute over the dating of the last of these), while Messana appears to have had the status of a Roman *municipium*.<sup>40</sup> Subsequently Agrigentum and Lilybaeum were also made *coloniae*, at the end of the 2nd century AD. The high concentrations of Latin inscriptions match these locations very closely (Lilybaeum fits the pattern better than appears, since a number of the inscriptions at Mazara probably come from Lilybaeum; Tauromenium is the principal exception). But one can go further, comparing **Figures 9** (Latin) and **10** (Greek): only



**Figure 9** Distribution of Latin inscriptions c. 50 BC–AD 700 (n = 953). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 5 June 2019 (Lipara excluded). Map prepared using Tableau Public 2019.2, with a map base from OpenStreetMap



**Figure 10** Distribution of Greek inscriptions c. 50 BC–AD 700 (n = 974). Data from *I.Sicily*, as of 5 June 2019 (Lipara excluded). Map prepared using Tableau Public 2019.2, with a map base from OpenStreetMap

*coloniae* produce more Latin than Greek inscriptions (with one exception, Halaesa, a Latin *municipium*, which one could highlight as exceptional in several ways).<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, those in the north and west of the island that do produce more Latin than Greek, produce significantly more (Lilybaeum, Panhormus, Thermae Himeraeae, Tyndaris). This distribution is somewhat prefigured by the Republican Latin inscriptions (see **Fig. 8**) – and in contrast to the south-east of the island (see next paragraph), may also reflect the less extensive pre-existing epigraphic culture – but it also speaks very clearly to the impact of the colonial (often veteran) settlements, and the priority in public epigraphy given to the use of Latin in the colonial setting.

The most visible contrast between Greek and Latin epigraphy in this period is the strong prevalence of Greek in the south-east of the island, and in particular in the two *coloniae* of Catina and Syracusee, the latter of which produces more Greek than Latin. In the case of Catina, this is difficult to contextualise, beyond its position in the wider south-

eastern region, since the pre-imperial epigraphic culture of Catania is almost invisible; on the other hand, in the case of both Syracusee and the wider south-east, this would appear to reflect significant continuity from the pre-Roman period (compare **Figures 2** and **5**). The strong concentration of Greek material in Syracusee itself is in large part a consequence of the dominance of Greek within the epigraphy of the Syracusan catacombs: Korhonen counts 1,100 Christian funerary inscriptions from Syracusee, of which 87 per cent are Greek and 13 per cent Latin. The extent to which this reflects spoken language, or language status, remains much debated, but after a detailed analysis of various linguistic and onomastic features, Korhonen has concluded that it must to a significant degree reflect underlying linguistic practice.<sup>42</sup> This conclusion is reinforced by the wider regional pattern illustrated in **Figures 9–10**.

The other region of the island that shows a distinctive pattern across these two maps is the epigraphic isolation of

Agrigentum in southern central Sicily.<sup>43</sup> Although always a relatively under-represented region, this epigraphic isolation becomes even more marked in the Roman period. The epigraphic evidence appears to accord remarkably well with Strabo's notorious observation that 'Of the remaining sides of Sicily, that which extends from Pachynos to Lilybaion has been utterly deserted, although it preserves traces of the old settlements, among which was Kamarina, a colony of the Syrakosians; Akragas, however, which belongs to the Geloans, and its seaport, and also Lilybaion still endure' (Strabo 6.2.5). The extent to which the archaeology supports Strabo's vision is not yet wholly clear, and the precise trajectories of urban and rural settlement in Roman Sicily remain the subject of debate: what evidence there is has been taken to support the idea of 'un generale spopolamento delle campagne nei primi secoli dell'occupazione romana' (a general depopulation of the countryside in the first centuries of Roman rule) in this part of the south coast, but ongoing survey work is complicating the picture.<sup>44</sup> Epigraphic material, by its very nature, tends to concentrate in urban centres, so its absence does not in itself entail 'desertion', but rather the apparent absence of the classic urban model in southern Sicily in the Roman period.

This survey necessarily only scratches the surface of the complexity of linguistic and material cultural interaction on the island in antiquity, as represented by the very particular medium of inscribed texts. Nonetheless, it has attempted to demonstrate the potential contribution which the epigraphic evidence can make to our understanding of the 'crossroads of the Mediterranean'; and the increasingly rich ways in which that material can be analysed, through the application of new technologies and open data.

## Notes

- 1 The most recent synthesis of the linguistic culture of ancient Sicily is Tribulato 2012a.
- 2 On the history of epigraphic corpora in Sicily, see De Vido 1999.
- 3 On *I.Sicily* see Prag *et al.* 2017; Prag and Chartrand 2018. A first attempt at such a survey, using weaker data, appears in Prag 2002; a more extensive analysis of the Hellenistic/Republican period can be found in Prag 2018a.
- 4 See, for example, Harris 1989, 268, and Edmondson 2002, 44–5. The *I.Sicily* project (<http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk>) currently records over 3,250 lapidary texts; we expect to add at least another thousand in the coming months, as work is ongoing to include the Siracusa catacomb inscriptions as well as unpublished material identified in museum and soprintendenza stores in Siracusa and Catania.
- 5 A copy of the main metadata exports used for this study is available online at DOI: 10.5287/bodleian:YeRab9boO (accessed 04.06.2019).
- 6 Poccetti 2012, 70–4; cf. Cordano 2002.
- 7 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 11.5.
- 8 For example, Korhonen 2011 and 2012.
- 9 Plato, contemporary with this 'gap', famously expressed the fear that Greek might die out on the island in the face of Phoenicio-Punic and Opikian (Oscan): [Plato], *Epistles* 8.353e; the latter did not become epigraphically dominant, however, and Plato's comment rather reflects the upheavals of 4th-century Sicily.

- 10 For Selinus, see Grotta 2010 and Brugnone 2006; for Mozia, see Amadasi Guzzo 1986.
- 11 ISic0822; note also the substantial altar, perhaps of Apollo Temenites, at Siracusa (ISic3011); substantial dedicatory texts on stone include that from temple G in Selinunte (ISic1087), and the Sicilian dedications at Olympia and Delphi, which belong in a different context (see, for example, Harrell 2002, Cavaliere 2013).
- 12 ISic3364 (on which see Agostiniani 2009, and Cordano 2012, emphasising the broader set of material from Mendolito); see Poccetti 2012 for an overview of Sikel epigraphy.
- 13 See Marchesini 2012 for an overview.
- 14 ISic1566 (Selinus); ISic3148 (Gela); ISic1425 (Naxos); ISic1048 (Akrai); ISic1435 (Megara Hyblaea).
- 15 For example, the architecturally grand funerary monument of Lissias from the environs of ancient Helorus (ISic1475) or the substantial marble base for a dedication to Hermes from Agrigento (ISic1489). Dating Sicilian inscriptions is notoriously difficult, since few texts offer clear internal criteria for dating, and dating by letter forms from such a relatively small and widely distributed sample is perilous.
- 16 See La Torre 2009 and Campagna 2011 for patterns of urbanisation in this period in Sicily.
- 17 The exceptional body of funerary material (*c.* 750 texts) preserved on the island of Lipara is significant in this regard (Bernabò Brea *et al.* 2003); in the data set used here it constitutes some two-thirds of the recorded Hellenistic funerary material, and is still under-reported; if it were to be excluded, then funerary epigraphy would constitute only 30% of the surviving material from this period.
- 18 See Wilson 1990, 237–42, on sources and use of stone in Sicily.
- 19 For this broader theme in Hellenistic Sicily, see Prag 2014 and Campagna 2011.
- 20 Burgio 2012 (Halaesa); Angeletti 2012 (Segesta); see also Campagna 2007 on epigraphy and euergetism in Sicily.
- 21 Halaesa (ISic1174, 3651); Tauromenion (ISic1247–55, 2985–7, 3081–2); Akrai (for example, ISic1028–35, 1038, 2965).
- 22 Prag 2013 offers a broader argument about 'Hellenistic' epigraphy in the western Mediterranean.
- 23 Mimblera 2012a, 248–9; see also Mimblera 2012b; Cicero, *ad Atticum* 5.11.5; 2 *In Verrem* 4.50. For the relationship of Sicilian Doric to Sicilian identity, see Willi 2008 and 2012.
- 24 Prag 2017.
- 25 On the use of bronze in Sicily, see Manganaro 2000, Prag 2018a, 136–9 and Prag 2018c, 109–10.
- 26 See Prag 2012 for an overview of the Roman conquest; Prag 2014 on the Republican period; Soraci 2016 for the Roman period as a whole; and Wilson 1990 for Sicily under the Roman Empire.
- 27 ISic0610; ISic0469.
- 28 See Frascchetti 1981 for Roman immigration; Tribulato 2012b on the linguistic aspects of the early Latin epigraphy on the island.
- 29 A newly discovered Latin dedication (ISic4368) set up in Lilybaeum by the Frentani 'qui colunt in Sicelia' [*sic*] encourages this view; see Ampolo 2016.
- 30 ISic0610, Aurelius Cotta, a milestone; ISic0723, C. Norbanus, recording building works(?); ISic0538, dedication by anonymous propraetor.
- 31 ISic1260; ISic1178; ISic1101; ISic0612; ISic3419; and note that Verres was honoured in Greek in Syracuse (Cicero, 2 *In Verrem* 2.154: *soter*); honours for Scipio at Halaesa, ISic0583.
- 32 Many of the key examples are discussed in detail in Tribulato

- 2012b, 302–19, to which we can now add the unique form ‘Sicelia’ in ISic4368.
- 33 ISic0583 and ISic0616 (see also Campagna 2007, 119); for this use of the accusative, see Adams 2003, 658–61.
- 34 ISic0618 is a Latin funerary stele from Syracuse with the vocative + *salve* formulation, familiar as vocative + *chaire* in eastern Sicilian funerary epigraphy (but Wilson 1990, 321, notes the rarity of relief sculpture on Sicilian funerary inscriptions, and the substantial relief of a plough on this stone probably reflects Italian practice); ISic0348 (probably Catania), a bilingual funerary inscription with the same formulation, but with *ei* in place of the Latin long *i*, which, combined with the uncertain Latin letter forms, is suggestive of a writer more familiar with Greek (Adams 2003, 48–51, and Korhonen 2004, no. 74).
- 35 Striking examples include the *prostatai* in a Greek dedication to Demeter from Avola, south of Syracuse (ISic3013); the names in a 1st-century BC *defixio* from Lilybaeum (SEG vol. 34, no. 953, Curbera 1997); and a late Republican opus signinum inscription from Megara Hyblaea (ISic3391). Exceptional is a Greek *defixio* with an appended list of Latin names in Latin of c. 200 BC, also from Lilybaeum (SEG vol. 49, no. 1301).
- 36 ISic2985, ISic2986 (Taormina); ISic1190 (τὸ μουνικίπιον, Haluntium); ISic0814 (ἐπὶ δυνῶν ἀνδρῶν, Agrigentum).
- 37 Tribulato 2012b, 321.
- 38 Wilson 1990, 33–45, summarises these developments; see further Vera 1996.
- 39 Dating the funerary epigraphy, in particular of the Roman period, is a relatively imprecise science, and the cataloguing of this material is very much a work-in-progress; consequently, it would be misleading at this stage to attempt more detailed analyses for the island as a whole than those presented in Figs 9–10.
- 40 Panhormus is omitted by Pliny, *Natural Histories* 3.88–90, but included by Strabo 6.2.5; see Wilson 1990, 37, 358, n. 40.
- 41 Latin presence is notable from an early date, perhaps linked to its location and privileged tax status (Cicero, 2 *In Verrem* 3.13); it may also be somewhat exceptional in both preservation and excavation. Facella 2006 provides a detailed study; for the epigraphy, see Prag and Tigano 2017.
- 42 Korhonen 2012, 338–47.
- 43 Prag 2018b considers this in slightly more detail.
- 44 See Bejor 2007, 16–17; Pfunter 2013 on reading Strabo on Sicily; and more generally Wilson 1990, 194–5. The overall question is now examined in detail in Pfunter 2019.

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# Chapter 11

## Philippianus and his Rural Estate in Late Roman Sicily: Recent Excavations at Gerace near Enna

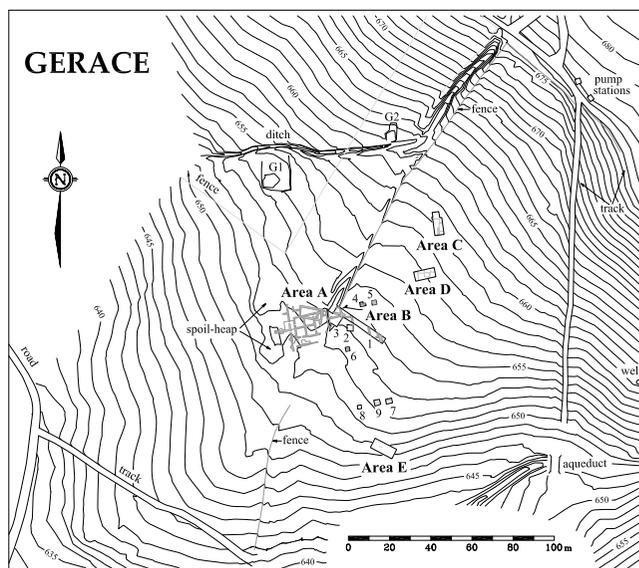
R.J.A. Wilson  
Department of Classical, Near Eastern  
and Religious Studies, University of  
British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

### Introduction

The Roman rural site in *contrada* Gerace lies in well-watered land 10km south of Enna, and 15km north-west of the well-known late Roman palatial villa near Piazza Armerina (**Fig. 1**).<sup>1</sup> It was first discovered in 1994 when a drainage ditch burst its banks in the rainy season and uncovered part of a geometric mosaic pavement. Subsequent excavation uncovered the outline plan, by tracing the tops of the walls, of a small villa-like building with approximately 10 rooms, and at least two, probably three corridors (Area A on **Fig. 1**). Trial trenching at two points, at the west end of the south corridor and in part of the small apsidal dining room, revealed geometric mosaic pavements.<sup>2</sup> In 2007 further work uncovered more but not all of the same two pavements.<sup>3</sup> The University of British Columbia's involvement at Gerace began in 2012, when a magnetometer survey revealed structures which quintupled the size of the ancient site.<sup>4</sup> This work discovered a major basilica-like hall structure (at 2 on **Fig. 2**), an amorphous area of activity further north at 3, an industrial zone with kilns at 5 and 6, and what are assumed to be outbuildings at 7–10. The site covers some 3.25ha. Since then three seasons of excavation have taken place, in 2013 and 2015–16, when Area A was further investigated and Areas B–D (see **Fig. 1**) were opened for the first time.<sup>5</sup>

Some Greek pottery, including a fragment of Attic black-figure ware, shows frequentation of Gerace as early as *c.* 500 BC.<sup>6</sup> There is then a long gap until the earliest Roman activity at the site, which belongs to the 2nd century AD. It consists of fragments of walling and associated pottery of *c.* AD 150; other structures above them belong to the 3rd century.<sup>7</sup> Whatever these buildings were – and their remains are too fragmentary to ascertain their function – they were totally demolished when the next phase of the site began, in the late 3rd or early 4th century AD. The principal buildings discovered belong to the late Roman period, during the 4th and 5th centuries AD. Decline set in before the end of the 5th century, and the final phase of activity dates mainly to early Byzantine times in the 6th and 7th

**Figure 1** Gerace, topographical plan, showing areas opened in 2013 and 2015–17. Area G1–2 marks the site of an excavation in 2000 (courtesy of Professor Alan Weston, British Columbia Institute of Technology)

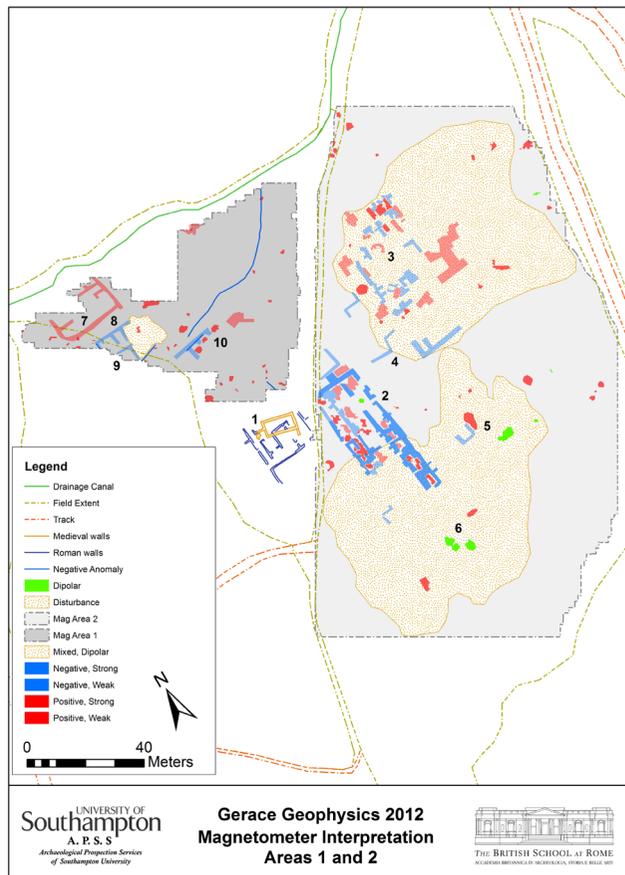


centuries AD, with dwindling activity in the 8th and 9th, possibly even the 10th, centuries.

### The store-building (Area B)

The earliest intelligible structure identified at Gerace is that of a large rectangular building, first identified, as noted above, by the geophysical survey of 2012. That research (2 on **Fig. 2**) appeared to show an L-shaped building rather than an oblong one, but excavation at the south-west corner demonstrated that the whole of this part had been lost to ploughing and soil erosion, and today the ground-level now drops markedly away here from that of the rest of the building.<sup>8</sup> Its overall measurements externally are 49.42m by 17.70m. It was built in the late 3rd or early 4th century, not earlier than AD 275.<sup>9</sup> Although the layout is slightly irregular, with the west wall not quite parallel to the east one, it is very solidly built of mortared rubble, with conspicuous amounts of hard white mortar binding it together. The east wall, excavated down to foundations, survives to a height of 1.25m. The plan is basilican, with a central ‘nave’ and two side ‘aisles’, and is paved with substantial stone slabs, which are intact in the section excavated (**Fig. 3a–b**). The paving does not, however, cover the whole width of the building, but stops on either side in a neat straight line, 1.65m short of the west and east walls (**Fig. 4**). The most plausible explanation for this arrangement is that structures of timber, such as grain bins, of which no trace now remains, lined the long side walls of the building. A great storehouse is therefore the most likely purpose of the building, which is similar in form to the even larger examples of *horrea* in other late Roman rural sites in Italy, such as at Piazza Armerina in Sicily and at villa 10 on the via Gabina east of Rome.<sup>10</sup> The fact that the paved floor at Gerace is not raised on underfloor supports to improve air circulation, although a necessity in the damper climes of northern Europe, is not an argument against this interpretation. The Roman writer Palladius, for example, whose *Opus Agriculturae* was published a few decades later than the construction of our store-building (c. AD 400), stresses that the floor of such structures should be laid on a good mortar bedding (which the Gerace building is), but makes no mention of raising the floor.<sup>11</sup>

One curious feature of the store-building is that its east external wall is 1.37m wide, double that of the other three exterior walls (0.69m).<sup>12</sup> There was no topographical reason why a thicker wall was required on its east side, nor can it have been done to impress, as the thickness of a wall cannot be ascertained from the outside – even if such late Roman store-buildings were in part intended as symbols of the *dominus*’ power.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps there was originally an intention to build all the exterior walls at the wide gauge but subsequently this was modified during construction. Interestingly a Greek unit of measurement, the Samian or Ionian foot of 34.8 cm, was used, so that walls 1, 2, 3 and 5 on **Figure 3b** here are all 2 feet wide, and wall 4 is 4 Samian feet wide. Overall the building measures 142 x 51 Samian feet; so it fell somewhat short of an exact 1:3 ratio, which might have been the original intention. It is a sign of architectural conservatism in late Roman Sicily that a Greek unit of measurement, the Samian or Ionian foot, was still being employed in the 4th century AD.<sup>14</sup>



**Figure 2** Gerace, geophysics interpretative plan: 1: Late Roman villa (Area A); 2: Store-building; 3–4: Site of the (larger) bath-house and other anomalous structures; 5–6: Kilns; 7–10: Outbuildings (?) (courtesy of Dr Sophie Hay, British School at Rome/University of Southampton)

Very few finds were made inside the store-building, which seems to have been kept clean until its final demise; how long it was in use is uncertain. It seems likely that, apart from grain, other produce from the estate would have been kept there, including perhaps hay for horses.<sup>15</sup> The absence of animal bones suggests that joints of meat, at least, were not kept in the excavated part of the building. No fire, however, accompanied the final destruction, and so no carbonised evidence of what was stored there is available. Its abandonment was caused by a catastrophic collapse of the roof, so total that a rebuilding or reroofing was not contemplated by the owner, who left it in ruins. Although no cracks were found in its walls in the small part of the store-building excavated, a likely agency for this destruction is an earthquake, possibly that which occurred in the reign of the Emperor Julian (AD 361–3): Libanius records as a consequence of it that ‘the greatest cities of Sicily lay in ruins’.<sup>16</sup> Structural damage attributable to the same earthquake has been detected at the Piazza Armerina villa close by.<sup>17</sup>

### The unfinished villa (Area A)

We do not know at present whether the store-building stood alone or was accompanied by a contemporary residential villa in the first half of the 4th century AD. One might have existed beneath the small villa-like building alongside it in Area A, but any archaeological layers that might lie under the existing, later structure have not so far been explored, nor natural subsoil reached there.

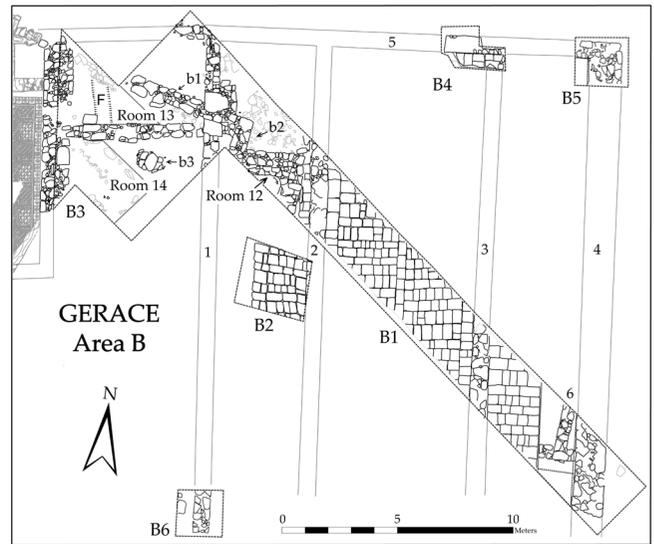
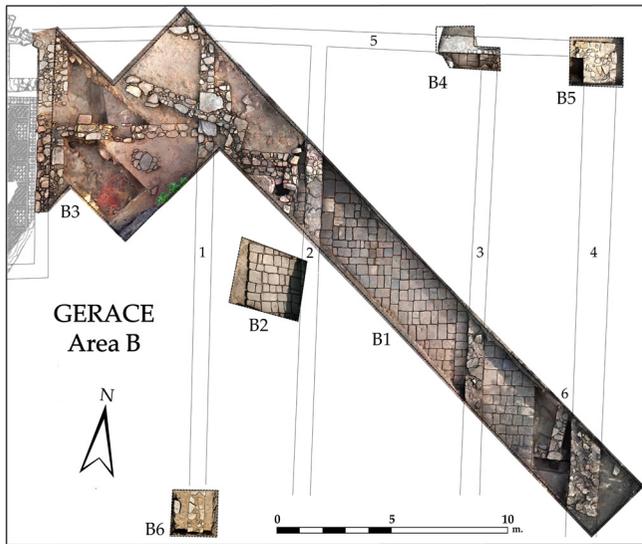


Figure 3 (a) Aerial photograph of Area B, including the northern part of the 4th-century store-building (walls 1–5); (b) plan of the same, showing the excavated portion of a hot pool from the early bath-house (Room 12), later demolished, and the two storerooms inserted in its place (Rooms 13 and 14). B1–3 are early Byzantine structures. The eastern edge of the mosaic-paved *aula* (see Fig. 5, Room 6) can be seen at the extreme left (courtesy of Lorenzo Zurlo, Ragusa)

Figure 4 View of the main excavated section of the store-building, from the east. Scale: 2m (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)



After the catastrophic collapse of the storehouse, a small residential villa was erected alongside it. The outline plan of this building, with just 10 or so rooms<sup>18</sup> and a footprint of about 30m by 20m (Fig. 5), had been largely established by earlier work at Gerace; but, as noted above, only parts of the south corridor and of a small apsidal dining room, both with geometric mosaic floors, had been explored to floor level during the earlier excavations of 1994 and 2007.<sup>19</sup> Our work since 2013 has excavated parts of three further rooms (1, 2 and 7) and of the west corridor, as well as uncovering the whole of the south corridor. Evidence was also found for the presence of a small independent bath-building, at a higher level immediately to the east. The latter was partly built on top of the floor of the destroyed store-building's west wing, and so must be later than it (12 on Fig. 3b).<sup>20</sup> In addition, ceramic evidence pressed into the mortar floor of Room 2 belonged to not earlier than *c.* AD 360,<sup>21</sup> and other pottery found in the villa belongs to the later 4th century or the 5th century.<sup>22</sup> There may be more rooms to the north (only the corner of one, Room 11, is known) and possibly more to the south-west, but the geophysical research has demonstrated that there is no major continuation of the villa to the south, and no sign of a courtyard. It is, therefore, an example of a compact late Roman villa, erected perhaps *c.* AD 370/375, and occupied for at least 75 and probably 100 years.

Unusually, we know the name of the man who built it. Over a hundred stamps on the tiles used to roof this building were found in the excavations of 2013 and 2015, all of them part of single production by a man called Philippianus.<sup>23</sup> There are 11 separate dies associated with this production, and the practice of multiple stamping on the same roof tile (up to four) and the resulting cross-links between the dies make it certain that these stamps were in simultaneous use (Fig. 6). If, as seems likely, the dies were cut in metal, repeat batches of the same type of tile could have been made by successive firings as necessary. Of the 11 dies, seven name Philippianus, always in the genitive case ending in -i ('belonging to' or 'production of'); three are rectangular (e.g. Fig. 7a), three are circular (Fig. 7c), and one is oval (Fig.

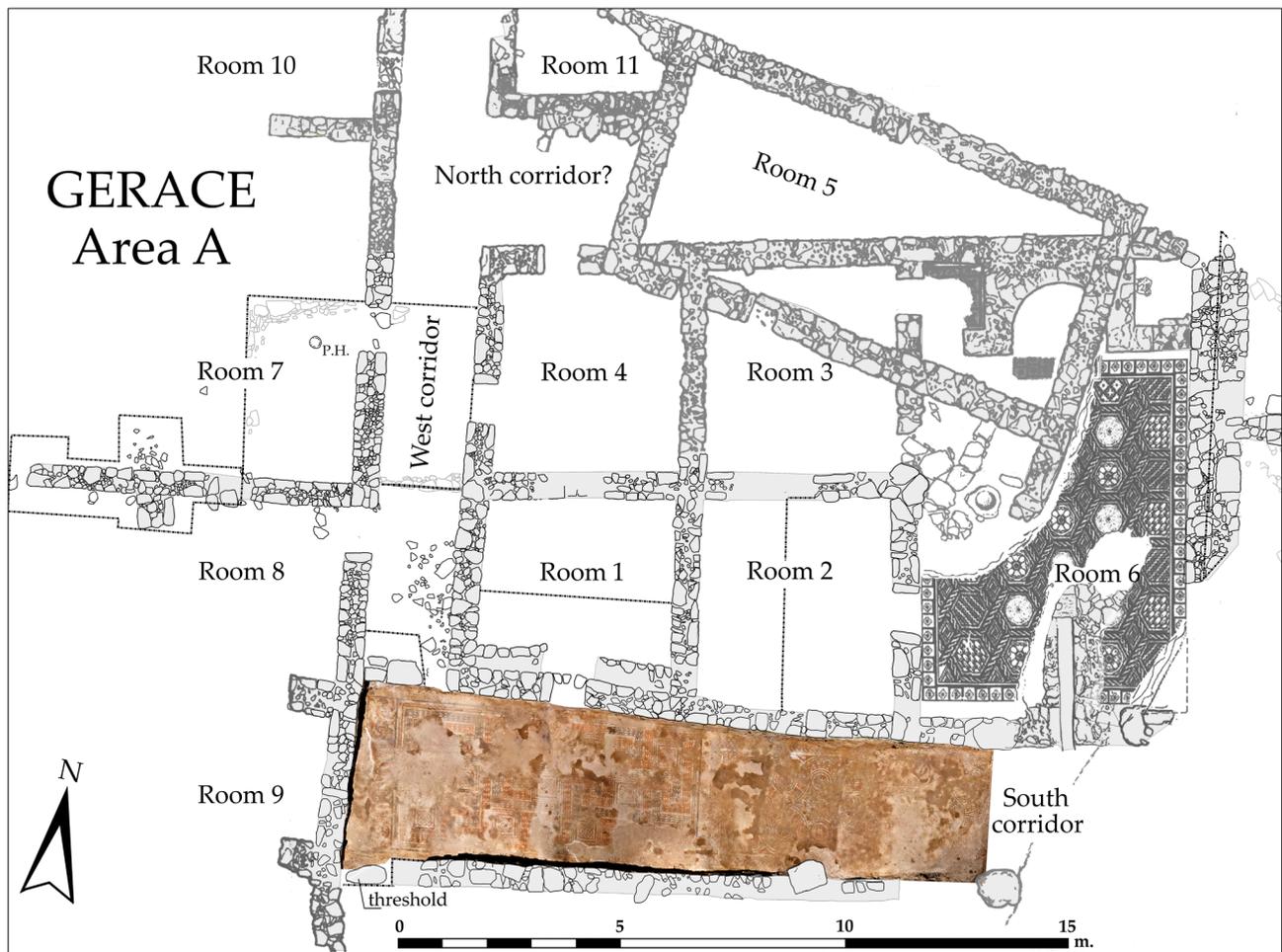


Figure 5 Plan of the late Roman villa (Area A). Room 5 belongs to an early Byzantine structure at a higher level, erected after the destruction of the villa. The current UBC project has excavated parts of Rooms 1, 2 and 7, and of the west and south corridors (courtesy of Lorenzo Zurla, Ragusa)

7e). Of the circular stamps, one spells the name with an initial letter F instead of PH (Fig. 6, Type 3), and another, in the form of a coin, has the letters arranged as a legend around a central standing horse, facing left (Type 5; Fig. 7d). One of the rectangular stamps has the name in two parts with the letters superimposed to form two monograms, one either side of a horse's head in profile (Type 2; Fig. 7b). The oval name-stamp, which is tiny (16mm across), shows Philippianus's name as a single monogram (Type 8; Fig. 7e).<sup>24</sup> Of the remaining four stamps two are anepigraphic and show a horse standing alone, one facing left, the other right (Types 6–7). The final two stamps are completely different and are good luck slogans, SALVS ('[your] good health') and TVTELA (literally 'protection' i.e. 'take care'), each inscribed within the form of a dolphin (Types 9–10). These last are normally stamped on the rounded edge of the tile, and are usually accompanied by one of the Philippianus name-stamps on the body of the tile immediately adjacent to it. Of the 11 dies, four (Types 1, 3, 9 and 10) are incuse and the rest are in relief, except for Type 2, which is both incuse (for the letters) and in relief (for the horse's head) (Fig. 7b).

In the context of rural production (and some of the stamps are over-fired, strongly suggesting on-site production), it seems highly unlikely that this name represents merely the tile-maker: it is surely improbable that the landowner would have permitted the name of an

employee to appear so prolifically and so prominently on the roof tiles made on his estate. Particularly intriguing are the references to horses. This might be nothing more than a play on the man's name: Philippianus is cognate with Philippos, which in Greek means 'lover of horses'.<sup>25</sup> The steeds are, however, race horses: on Type 4 the animal is dressed with a plume attached to its ears, and a palm branch, symbolic of victory, is spread before it (Fig. 7c). In addition, a victory crown with ribbons marks the separation of the first and last letters of 'Philippiani' in the accompanying inscription. The 'coin-type' die (Type 5) also incorporates the victory crown in its legend (Fig. 7d). So is it possible that Philippianus was a given name, an *agnomen*, to reflect the man's passion for horses? Or did he have this name from birth because his father was mad on horses, and his son then merely continued the family business? Could he just possibly have been a breeder or trainer of ponies for the circuses of the Roman world, even for the Circus Maximus itself? We know from literary evidence of late Roman date that Sicily was one of the sources of supply for horses to Italy,<sup>26</sup> and a medallion from Rome names the horse depicted on it as 'Seracusus', 'The Syracusan'.<sup>27</sup>

The villa was entered across a threshold at the south-west corner, from which the south corridor was reached (Fig. 5). When first built the latter gave access to Rooms 1, 2, 6, and 9 as well as the west corridor, but the doorways

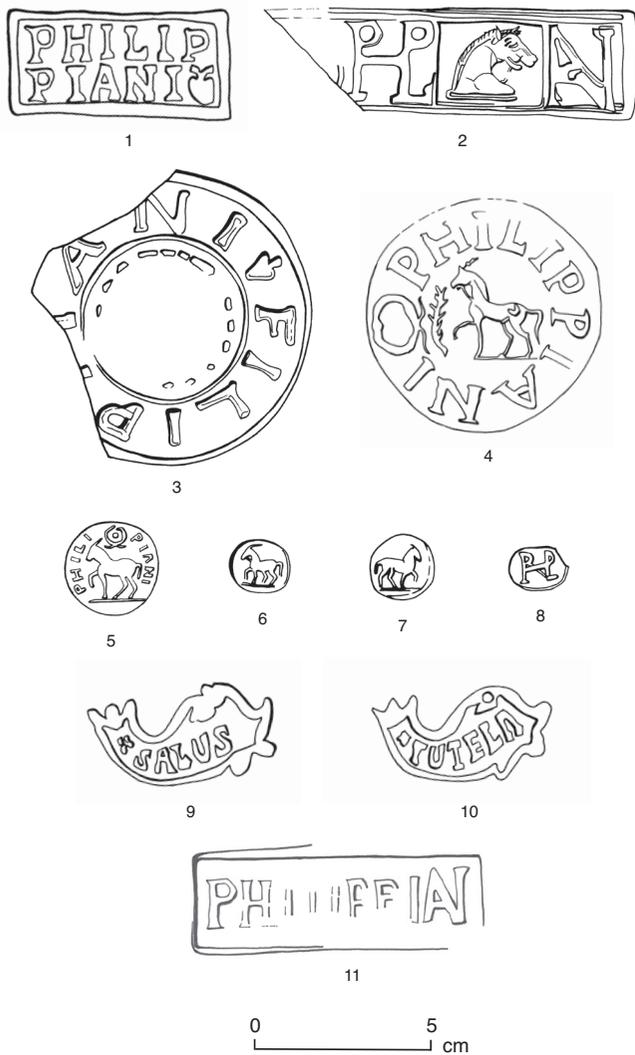


Figure 6 Drawings of the 11 types of roof-tile stamps. Drawings by Sally Cann (Matrice, CB)

into 2 and 9 were blocked in a secondary period. Room 1, of which the south half was excavated, was found to have a bench and a work surface at waist height against its south wall; its earth floor was strewn with animal bones. The walls were never plastered but left as exposed stonework. The room had every appearance of having served as a kitchen; whether an oven lies in the northern part of the room is, however, unknown.<sup>28</sup> Room 2, of which the eastern half was excavated, had a white lime-mortar floor and a rendering of plain white plaster on the walls. That in the southern part of the room was later redecorated with a much inferior quality of plaster; this was done when the south doorway was blocked and part of the south wall was rebuilt, presumably after partial collapse. Room 2, and probably also the unexcavated Room 3, were serving rooms for those attending on the master and his guests in Room 6. The latter, clearly a small dining room, with an apse and a geometric mosaic floor, was not investigated as part of the present project. A portion of Room 7 was, however, excavated and its south wall traced, although the position of the south-west corner could not be established; internally it measures 7.78m by at least 7.22m, and may well have been originally square. The largest room in the villa, it was found (in the excavated portion of it at least) to have only a

utilitarian *opus signinum* floor, not suggestive of high status. Even more remarkably, the west corridor never received more than a beaten earth floor throughout its life; when a used surface was getting grubby, fresh earth was simply laid. Because the rooms with hard-surface floors were kept clean throughout the life of the building, the pottery fragments which had accumulated in this corridor, buried below each successive new earth floor, were helpful in understanding the chronology of the villa.<sup>29</sup>

The villa was not very well laid out: the four roughly square rooms (1–4 on Fig. 5), for example, have few pairs of walls that are parallel with one another, and the south corridor, which survives for a maximum length of 14.52m,<sup>30</sup> varies in width between 3.88m at the west end and 3.11m at the east. The irregularity caused problems for the designer of the mosaic that carpets it: the two main rectangular panels of the design could not be of the same width north–south, and the borders of the western part of the floor were not parallel to one another, to compensate for the irregular alignment of the north wall with respect to the south. It is also clear that a short stretch of the corridor’s north wall must have been rebuilt in a secondary period, because it overlies the eastern part of the mosaic at one point. The design is in three parts: a single band of swastika-*peltae* (with a Solomon’s knot at the centre) on the western border of the floor, edged with half-*peltae*; a rectangular panel filled with a design of intersecting bands of laurel wreaths (one garland in red and yellow, the other in greyish-blue and yellow, in an orthogonal swastika-meander arrangement, and with guilloche mats in the squares left in the field: Fig. 8); and a final rectangular panel (its east end is lost) occupied by opposed and undulating bands of laurel embracing circular medallions in the interspaces.<sup>31</sup> Both the main panels are designs which occur in polychrome in North Africa, but these are unique examples for Sicily; they are occasionally paralleled, either directly or in variant versions, elsewhere in the western provinces.<sup>32</sup>

One detail of this mosaic floor is of particular interest. Just inside the entrance threshold at the south-west corner, in the white border outside the geometric patterns, there is depicted in the floor, in black, a straight line with two short ‘arms’ at either end, each ending in a point (Fig. 9). Comparisons with mosaics in the Eastern Empire, particularly those showing the personification of *Ktisis* (‘Foundation’), as well as a depiction of it on a marble pediment in Rome showing a builder’s toolkit, indicate that this item may be the foot rule of 296mm, used for precision measurement in Roman building.<sup>33</sup> The message to anyone entering seems to have been that ‘you are now entering a well-built (and well-ordered) house’, and perhaps there was an apotropaic element to the image as well. As we have seen, the villa in Area A is anything but ‘well-built’, but it is constructed, as far as we can ascertain, using the Roman foot or a unit very close to that length.<sup>34</sup> As a ‘welcome mat’, the depiction of the foot rule on its own here at Gerace appears to be unique in Roman mosaic.

The compact villa of Area A has an acentric layout, in that the mosaic-paved dining room lay at the eastern end of the small complex (6 on Fig. 5) and was not placed centrally with rooms arranged on either side of it, as had been the



Figure 7 Photographs of tile-stamps in the Philippiani series: (a) Type 1; (b) Type 2; (c) Type 4; (d) Type 5; (e) Type 8 (photographs by R.J.A. Wilson)

custom for centuries in villa-building in the Mediterranean. This shift away from traditional layouts may be part of a trend in late Roman Italian villas to abandon the standard peristyle design with its major rooms set on the principal axial alignments.<sup>35</sup> Later changes modified this isolation of the dining room. As we have seen, a small independent bathhouse was built at a higher level to accompany the villa when it was first constructed *c.* AD 370; but in a secondary period, probably before the end of the 4th century, it was torn down<sup>36</sup> and two storage rooms (13 and 14, **Fig. 3b**) were inserted in the space between the *aula* (Room 6 in **Fig. 5**)

and the west wall of the ruined granary. This involved some considerable earth-moving, as the new rooms were inserted deep into the ground to ensure maximum coolness and insulation for the agricultural produce to be stored there. In a still later period the insulation was further improved when a second wall was built alongside the rooms' west walls. This involved blocking up the original access door between Rooms 13 and 14, and untidily knocking a hole in the same party wall a short distance to the east. Both rooms had floors of beaten earth, and Room 13 yielded fragments of large storage containers (*dolia*).



**Figure 8** Detail of a part of the geometric mosaic in the south corridor in the late Roman villa (Area A), seen from the west; c. AD 370/375 (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)

Some time between AD 450 and 500 disaster struck again: a fire ravaged the villa. In the storerooms, the yield of the last harvest was destroyed, so preserving for us an enormous cache of carbonised seeds of the crops grown, along with attendant field weeds gathered in with them. Barley (*hordeum*) seeds are the most plentiful, present in the thousands (**Fig. 10**), followed by bread wheat (*triticum aestivum*), but broad bean, lentil, chickpea, pea and grape have also been identified in the preliminary analysis

**Figure 9** Area A, detail of the mosaic design inside the threshold at the south-west corner of the south corridor, from the north: a Roman foot measuring rod. Scale: 20cm (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)



conducted so far.<sup>37</sup> When fully studied the seeds will provide rare evidence for the agricultural economy of a Sicilian site in late antiquity.<sup>38</sup> The presence of wheat and barley at Gerace is hardly surprising, and is of course entirely appropriate in the land of Ceres, whose great cult centre at Enna lay only 10km away.<sup>39</sup>

The date of the fire is suggested by radiocarbon testing of carbonised material<sup>40</sup> combined with the evidence of artefacts found in the destruction levels elsewhere in the villa. Two lamps from the kitchen (**Fig. 5**, Room 1), for example, are of a class of African lamps (smaller in size than that of the main series) which is known to have been produced only in the second half of the 5th century.<sup>41</sup> Another item of interest from the destruction layer in the south corridor was the fragments of Late Roman 4 amphorae, which carried wine from the Gaza strip in Israel.<sup>42</sup> The thick burnt layers rested directly on the floors, suggesting that the villa had been kept clean and maintained right up to the final fire; only against the south wall of the south corridor, which might have been partly open to the elements, was a small quantity of wind-blown soil found below the burnt layers.

### The kiln (Area E)

The geophysical research of 2012 made it likely that there were at least two areas of kilns on the Gerace estate, and it was intended to investigate one of them in 2016 by excavation (6 on **Fig. 2**). In the event, time did not permit this to get beyond surface clearance, when the rounded edge of one side of a kiln was discovered. Of particular interest were some loose pieces of brick associated with it, bearing fragmentary relief inscriptions. They comprise the monogram of Philippianus's name, with all the letters superimposed on one another in a single composition – as in tile-stamp Type 8 (**Fig. 7e**), but on a much bigger scale (**Fig. 11**). The bricks are not wasters but are heavily vitrified along one edge, suggesting that parts of them were exposed to high temperatures in the kiln, but not the whole. It is possible, therefore, that the bricks were used in the construction of the kiln, in which case the latter can be closely linked once more with the activities of Philippianus in the second half of the 4th century AD.

Two further brick fragments found on the surface nearby bear a different name, also with letters in relief. They record the *tria nomina* of a Roman citizen, Cn . . . Cylin[. The *nomen* is missing, but the *cognomen* is almost certainly Cylindros (or -us).<sup>43</sup> The bricks are not wasters but are both from the same die, and are of the same fabric as that of the Philippianus bricks. They could in theory have been manufactured elsewhere and brought to the site, perhaps at another period when there was no kiln activity at Gerace; otherwise they were also made at Gerace, whether for an outside client, or for a Gerace landowner before or after Philippianus. It is interesting that the *cognomina* of the only two individuals associated with our site, Cylindrus and Philippianus, show Latinised versions of Greek names – an illustration of the hybrid character of Sicilian society during the Roman Empire, when many parts of the island retained a strongly Greek flavour down into late antiquity.<sup>44</sup>

### The main bath-house (Area D)

About 50m north-east of the villa in Area A, higher up the slope at Gerace, an excavation area was opened to investigate anomalies indicated by the geophysics. By pure chance part of a well-preserved Roman bath-house, which had left no clear trace in the geophysics results,<sup>45</sup> was located (Area D), with walls still standing 2.38m high, even though no trace of it had remained on the surface (**Fig. 12a**). The whole of one room, a hot bath (*solium*: 1 on **Fig. 12b**), and parts of three further rooms (2–4), were uncovered.<sup>46</sup> The bath, 2.37m by 1.37m internally (exactly 8 by 6 Roman feet), was D-shaped, with a window embrasure opening in its curved wall (**Fig. 13**). The *praeefurnium* was not located, as customarily, on the central axis but on the eastern side of the apse (12). A thick black tar-like substance lined the hypocaust basement, possibly the result of burning damp wood as fuel.<sup>47</sup> The fittings of the bath had been comprehensively stripped when the baths were decommissioned: this involved the smashing of the white concrete floor, fragments of which were found in the excavation, in order to gain access to the bricks of the *pilae* in the hypocaust beneath and in particular to the large bricks that spanned the gaps between them to support the floor. No trace of these or of the *pilae* remained, except for a single wall-flue (a *tubulus*, for conducting hot air vertically), which had been pressed into service as a *pila* and filled with lime-mortar for greater stability; the mortar rendered it unfit for recycling and so it alone was left *in situ* (14 on **Fig. 12b**). All the *tubuli* had been systematically stripped from the walls: their impressions remained clearly in the wall plaster. Impressions of two builders' timber planks, placed on the wet concrete basement floor during construction, before the latter had properly dried, were also detected, as well as those of four *pilae* bases (15–16 on **Fig. 12b**). The apse was roofed by a semi-dome composed of terracotta vaulting tubes between 14cm and 20cm long. Of these 214 were found intact, and broken pieces attest the presence of a minimum of 120 more.<sup>48</sup> This vaulting method, first invented in Sicily in the 3rd century BC, was commonly used in North Africa from the 2nd century AD onwards, from where it was reintroduced into Sicily.<sup>49</sup> Gerace is only the second example of a villa excavation in Sicily (Piazza Armerina was the first) to have produced evidence for their use.<sup>50</sup> Few vaulting tubes were found in the other main heated rooms (2 and 3), even though it seems likely that they were also so roofed, so some of those found in the hot pool may have been thrown there from other rooms during the stripping process; but many more must have been dumped outside the building as well, because 335 or so tubes are nothing like enough to roof the spaces in question.<sup>51</sup>

The *caldarium* to the north of Room 1 was not extensively explored for safety reasons, but pieces of geometric mosaic floor were retrieved from it as well as some fragments of marble slabs which had once panelled its walls, including *pavonazzetto* from the Docimian quarries near Afyon and Proconnesian from the Sea of Marmora, both in Turkey, and *cipollino* from Euboea and *rosso antico* from Cape Tenaro on the southern tip of the Peloponnese, both in Greece, as well as white marbles.<sup>52</sup> The hypocaust *pilae* in this room were circular. By contrast the *pilae* in the *tepidarium* next door (Room 3) were square, and less comprehensively robbed

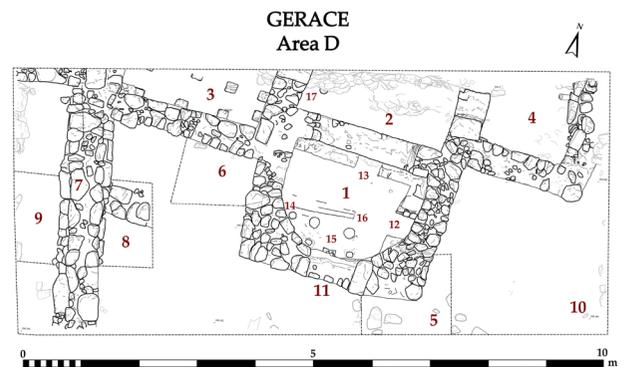


Figure 10 Area B3, detail of part of the deposit of carbonised seeds, mostly of barley but with some of wheat, recovered from Room 14. Scale: 1cm (photograph by Professor Jennifer Ramsay, The College at Brockport, NY)



Figure 11 Area E, kiln, a brick stamped with the monogram of Philipianus, in relief. Scale: 5cm (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)

Figure 12 Area D: (a) aerial view of the part of the late Roman bath-house excavated in 2017; (b) plan (courtesy of Lorenzo Zurlam, Ragusa)





**Figure 13** Area D, the apsidal hot pool (1 on Fig. 12b), from the north-west, showing window embrasure (top), exit drainpipe marking the original floor level (to the right of the ranging pole) and the furnace flue (centre, left), as well as the impressions of *tubuli* in the plastered apse wall. Scale: 2m (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)

(**Fig. 14**). Once again the floor mosaic, as in Room 2, had been smashed to retrieve the large bricks from the hypocaust below it; here the mosaic pattern, to judge from the small fragments recovered, was made up of overlapping scales. Time prevented full examination of Room 4, a rectangular chamber opening off the east side of the *caldarium*; comparanda from other *balnea* would suggest that this too was a hot pool.<sup>53</sup> Of particular interest here were two large pieces of what is almost certainly flooring, with smooth upper surfaces. Both had come to rest in a near-vertical position, clearly fallen from above: perhaps they were part of the wall facing in Pool 4 that had slipped down from higher up. The dramatic position in which these pieces had ended up does not look to have been the result of natural decay, and one wonders whether the damage and collapse might have been caused as a result of a seismic shock.<sup>54</sup>

Whatever the reason for their abandonment, the baths seem to have been given up sometime in the second half of the 5th century, because the pottery and other material found in the fill of the baths belongs exclusively to that period. It looks as though the structure was systematically stripped of materials for recycling, and then deliberately filled in: tip lines of the earth dumps were clearly visible in excavation. Much harder to answer is when the bath-house

**Figure 14** Area D, Room 3 (*tepidarium*), hypocaust furnace arch in the south wall, and remains of *pilae* that once supported the room's raised floor, from the north. Scale: 2m (photograph by R.J.A. Wilson)



was built. By their very nature, baths do not contain occupation debris: they are kept clean in order to function. So how does this bath-house relate to the other structures found at Gerace, lower down the slope? It is tempting to think that it might have been a larger replacement for the small baths further south, of which, as we have seen, only a fragment survived later demolition. In that case it is by no means impossible, if erected before the end of the 4th century, that the baths in Area D were also the work of Philippianus. No Philippianus roof tiles were found at the baths, but conventional tiled roofs would not be expected for its heated rooms. The 2016 excavations, in other words, produced no conclusive evidence which might link the structure with him. Perhaps the baths were constructed *c.* AD 400. Whether that was before or after Philippianus's death we do not know.

### Early Byzantine occupation

The estate at Gerace had ceased to exist as an elite property by the end of the 5th century AD, or at the very latest by the beginning of the 6th. It was around then that a late Roman/early Byzantine village grew up over the ruins of the Roman farming estate, a phenomenon seen at other abandoned late Roman Sicilian villas, such as Piazza Armerina and Patti Marina.<sup>55</sup> In Area A, the structure marked 5 on **Figure 5** is almost certainly of this date or a little later, and immediately to the east, in Area B3, fragmentary structures (b1–3 on **Fig. 3b**), much disturbed by the plough, were detected overlying the decaying Roman building. These were associated with African red slip wares of the first half of the 7th century,<sup>56</sup> and with a local coarse ware, in a black fabric with prominent white calcite grits, which is decorated on the exterior with circular impressions or long untidy lines, looking like straw marks made on the surface when the clay was still moist (hence its name, *a stuoia*, 'straw-work' pottery). It is attested quite widely in eastern Sicily in the early Byzantine period.<sup>57</sup>

More coherent remains of this period, datable to the early 6th century AD, were found at the northern end of the site (Area C: **Figs 15a–b**). An area of well-preserved stone flagging, part of an open yard, was flanked on three sides by walls, reasonably well-built on north (2) and south (7), but very irregularly and chaotically constructed on the east (3, 4, and 8). The incorporation of massive stones in the north wall, clearly reused, presupposes the existence of impressive architecture in some earlier phase of the site. Against the east wall is a staircase ramp (10) serving the upper floor of Room 13; later it was extended (11), so that the new room added at this time (12) must also have had an upper floor. Two-storey buildings with access staircases in an exterior yard are known elsewhere in Sicily, most notably at Punta Secca (Kaukana) in Ragusa province.<sup>58</sup> This part of the site does not seem to have been occupied much beyond the early 7th century. There is some 5th-century activity below, including evidence for metalworking; a dump of pottery of this date found on the east side of the trench (14 on **Fig. 15b**) included joining parts of an amphora of type Late Roman 8, which had brought wine to Gerace from the Greek island of Samos (**Fig. 16**).<sup>59</sup> This amphora has been recognised elsewhere in Sicily only at the coastal site of Punta Secca.<sup>60</sup>

That wine was brought such long distances to late Roman Gerace, a site 40km from the coast as the crow flies, adds an important new dimension to our knowledge of the site and its links with wider Mediterranean trade.

### Acknowledgements

The excavations were financed by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and were made possible by the granting of a *concessione di scavo* by the Regione Siciliana. To both of these organisations (and especially to Dr Salvatore Gueli and Dr Pinella Marchese of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali di Enna), and to the landowner of Gerace, Sra. Antonella Fontanazza Coppola, who graciously permitted access to her property, my debts are therefore profound. The encouragement and support of Enza Cilia, discoverer of Gerace in 1994, and of the Stellino family at Agriturismo Il Mandorleto, are a constant joy. Of my many other debts I would like to pay especial tribute to my supervisors (Dan Waterfall, Paolo Guarino, Lesley Dunwoodie and Antonietta Lerz) and to my many specialists, including Professor Michael MacKinnon (Winnipeg: animal bones), Professor Jennifer Ramsay (SUNY Brockport: seeds), and my pottery expert Dr Tomoo Mukai (Aix-en-Provence).

### Postscriptum

The text above reflects the content of the talk given to the conference in June 2016. Since then two further excavation campaigns at Gerace have taken place, in May/early June 2017 and 2018. In 2017, at Area E, the kiln mentioned above was excavated: it was used for the production of Philippianus's roof tiles with stamp-types 1 and 3 (over-fired wasters were found in it). The bricks bearing his monogram in relief letters, were, as tentatively suggested above, used in the kiln's construction, demonstrating Philippianus's direct investment in estate infrastructure.<sup>61</sup> In Area D, the bath-house up the hill, the rest of the *tepidarium* (Room 3) was excavated and the room found to be 2.37m (8 Roman feet) square. This is now known as *tepidarium* 2, as a smaller *tepidarium* 1 (Room 5) was excavated alongside it to the north in 2017. As in the other heated rooms, the mosaic floor in *tepidarium* 1 had been smashed in order to extract the bricks from the hypocaust basement beneath when the baths were decommissioned. A further example of a *tubulus* filled with lime-mortar serving as a *pila*, similar to that in 1, was found in *tepidarium* 2. The list of marbles attested in the three heated rooms has increased to a dozen: they now also include *giallo antico brecciato* from Chemtou in Tunisia, *portasanta* from Chios in Greece, *biagio antico* from Lesbos, and *verde antico* from Lárissa in Thessaly. The *frigidarium* had two cold-water pools side by side, of which one was excavated. A vertical fissure passing right through it strongly suggests that it was damaged by an earthquake or tremor (first suspected from the evidence in Room 4 described above); this happened some time in the second half of the 5th century AD. Burning on the floor of the adjacent *frigidarium* suggests that this event may have happened at night, if these are scorch marks from fallen wall-torches: the burning is limited to discrete patches along the west wall and is not suggestive of wholesale roof collapse in a fire, when more extensive evidence of burning across the floor would be

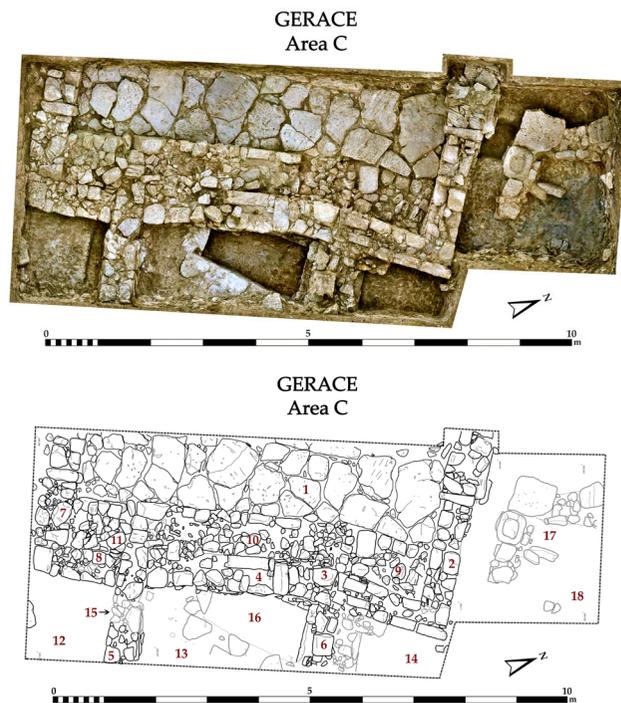
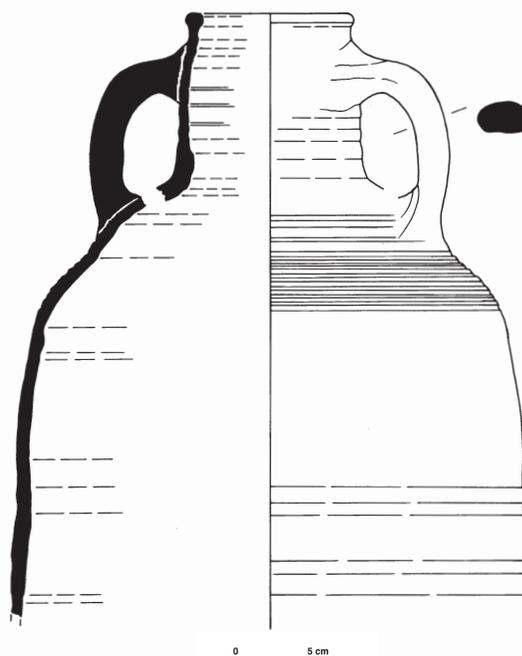


Figure 15 Area C: (a) aerial view; (b) plan (courtesy of Lorenzo Zurla, Ragusa)

expected. It is possible but not provable that the fire that destroyed the villa in Area A occurred at the same time, but more likely this was a separate event a decade or two later. An interesting technical detail was the use of *pisé* in the upper part of the party wall between the *frigidarium* and *caldarium*, presumably for its insulation properties (although hard to parallel in Roman bath-house construction anywhere, except in the military baths at Castell Collen in Wales); that it failed is shown by the presence of a second north wall to the *caldarium*, 75cm further south than the original one, the construction of which also blocked the

Figure 16 Drawing of a Samian wine amphora (late Roman 8), found in a deposit at 14 on Fig. 15b (drawing by Sally Cann, Matrice, CB)



underfloor flue that originally let hot air from the *caldarium* into *tepidarium* 1 (a new flue to replace it was knocked through the wall in the south-east corner of the room).

The doubt expressed above about who built the baths (probably *c.* AD 380 rather than later) was removed when the *frigidarium* floor was partly exposed: it was found to have a mosaic inscription around all four sides, of which two were uncovered in 2017. A third side begins PHIL[, suggesting a link to Philippianus. That the baths are indeed his, however, was already confirmed in 2017 by the discovery of his monogram (of the same type as that employed in the kiln construction-bricks in Area E, and in a tile-stamp: **Figs 7e, 11**), as an emblem in a central part of the floor. The use of a monogram to identify the owner of a rural estate in mosaic is attested at only one other villa in the Roman Empire, near Cuevas de Soria in Spain, also of late 4th-century date. The mosaic design in the *frigidarium*, of overlapping and tangent 'shield' hexagons, framed once again with bands of laurel, is attested on only a single floor elsewhere in the Roman Empire, at Djemila in Algeria, which is later than the Gerace floor and uses guilloche, not laurel, to frame the hexagons.

The rest of the mosaic was uncovered in 2018, so the full text of its accompanying inscription can be read as: '(hedera) PHILIPPIANORVM PRAEDIA FELI[cia ]/ [[(hedera ?)]] (palm branch) CAPITOLINIS GAVDIVM/ (hedera) PLVRA FABRICETIS (hedera) MELLIORA<sup>62</sup> DEDI/ (hedera) CETIS (hedera) ASCLEPIADES SENESCAS CVM TVIS/, viz. 'May the estate of the Philippiani prosper! Joy to [or for] the Capitolini! May you build more things, may you dedicate better things. Asclepiades, may you grow old with your family.' Asclepiades was probably a relative of Philippianus, perhaps his son or son-in-law, and the 'Philippiani' would therefore refer to an estate run by two family members. Ivy leaves (*hederae*) are used as sentence breakers, and also at or near each corner. There are monograms of Asclepiades and the Capitolini (as well as that of the Phillipiani, found in 2017) in the mosaic's central roundels; the fourth example is destroyed.

Study of the animal bones from four seasons at Gerace has highlighted the prevalence of horses at Gerace, and there is evidence among them, too, for the presence of foals, even of an equine milk tooth.<sup>63</sup> If Philippianus was raising horses at Gerace, was there a stud farm here, to which allusion is made in the tile-stamp images of the horses? Did Philippianus make his money, therefore, not only from traditional agriculture, but also by breeding and then sending ponies to compete in races at circuses in Sicily and elsewhere (as noted above, literary evidence suggests that Sicily was a known source of supply)? Particularly intriguing is the reference to the Capitolini. This could be the name of a family into which a Philippianus (a daughter?) had married, in which case Asclepiades might have been Philippianus's son-on-law rather than his son (the estate having now become that of the Philippiani in the plural, as noted above). But of course such a suggestion is pure speculation. Alternatively, could the Capitolini possibly refer to the *certamina Capitolina* (also known as the Capitolia), founded by Domitian in Rome in AD 86 and still going strong in the late 4th century? The palm branch which precedes the acclamation on the mosaic recalls the victory

palm shown on the victorious race horse imagery on two of the roof-tile types (**Fig. 7b–c**), and could be taken to mean that Philippianus was victorious in one of these contests in Rome. The Latin, however, would in that case be a little strained (we might expect *ex* or *in* before *Capitolinis*), so this interpretation cannot be regarded as certain, not least because monograms are normally restricted to people's names rather than those of institutions. However, there are parallels for the use of slogans in monogrammatic form, and if Philippianus was, as he appears to have been, so keen on using monograms, why not refer to the games where he won at least one prize by creating a new monogram?

Another question that remains is this. Does another villa, the villa of Philippianus, await discovery somewhere near the baths, undetected by geophysics? In that case, the apparently unfinished villa in Area A was merely a temporary dwelling for him, built after the disaster of the 360s which had destroyed not only the store-building but also, no doubt, a previous home. But there may not have been a second villa: one of the pools in the *frigidarium* was never installed, and the walls of the room were given only their preparatory plaster layer, not their final decoration. Both the lavish bath-house and the villa in Area A seem, therefore, to have been left unfinished, presumably because Philippianus died before the project was completed; nevertheless both villa and baths were used by others for some decades. Further research may throw fresh light on some of these intriguing questions.<sup>64</sup>

## Notes

- 1 I am very grateful to Dirk Booms and Peter Higgs for inviting me to address the conference, especially as the Gerace project concentrates on a period (between the 4th and 7th centuries AD) which lies outside the principal foci (Greek and Norman) of the accompanying exhibition (Booms and Higgs 2016), the *raison d'être* of the conference.
- 2 Cilia Platamone 1996; 1997.
- 3 Bonanno 2013a, b; 2014a, b; Bonanno *et al.* 2010.
- 4 Hay and James 2013; Wilson 2014a.
- 5 Subsequent to the British Museum Conference, further excavation seasons took place in 2017 and 2018: see the Postscriptum at the end of this paper.
- 6 Wilson 2017, 294–6 with fig. 28.
- 7 Their location is at 6 on **Figure 3b**.
- 8 Wilson 2015, 191–202; 2017, 286–92; and Wilson 2018b, 223–5. There are parallel reports in Italian in *Sicilia Antiqua* 12 (2015), 129–62 and in 15 (2018), 287–314.
- 9 In Wilson 2015, 196, I suggested that the date was 'unlikely to be earlier than *c.* AD 325', but this chronology has now been revised backwards by Dr Tomoo Mukai.
- 10 Piazza Armerina (*c.* AD 320/30, 87m long): Pensabene 2010–11, 185, fig. 22; 2016, 242–4. Via Gabina 10 (*c.* AD 400, 79m long): Widrig 2009, 38–54.
- 11 Palladius 1.19.1. The absence of water troughs or drains to assist in mucking-out makes its interpretation as a stable unlikely; nor did a phosphate analysis of soil samples on top of the flagged floor reveal any trace of equine urine (I thank Dr Cosimo Di Stefano, Centro Regionale di Progettazione e Restauro, Palermo, for carrying out this test).
- 12 A small stretch of the south wall uncovered in 2016 was, however, only 0.63m wide.

- 13 Cf. Brown 2013, 14: ‘... great granaries were a sight calculated to trigger disquiet in late Roman minds. Large villas flaunted the wealth of their own by being built on solid granaries, endowed with heavy locked gates’.
- 14 Wilson 2015, 220; 2017, 287–9.
- 15 I owe this suggestion to Professor Bill Hanson (Glasgow).
- 16 Libanius 18.291–3.
- 17 Pace Pensabene 2010–11, 193, this was not due to the earthquake of AD 365, the epicentre of which lay near Crete, which did not affect the interior of Sicily: see Wilson 2014b, 695–6; 2015, 196, n. 17.
- 18 Room 5 on Fig. 5, retaining the numbering system of Cilia Platamone 1996, belongs to an early Byzantine structure built over the ruins of the late Roman building.
- 19 See notes 2–3 above.
- 20 All that remained of it was a hot-water pool and its hypocaust; the exterior furnace arch was blocked by a stone slab on abandonment. Since such a pool cannot have stood alone, it follows that a small attendant bath-building once lay immediately adjacent to the west, in the space between Room 12 and the dining room 6, and was later demolished (Wilson 2015, 189 with fig. 11 on 191; 2017, 272–6 and 298–9).
- 21 African red slip ware Hayes form 67A: Wilson 2015, 187 with n. 11, and 223 with fig. 25.6 on 224.
- 22 Wilson 2015, 223–4 with fig. 25.7–8; 2017, 306–8 with fig. A1.1–7. The villa had earlier been dated to c. AD 200 by Cilia Platamone (1997, 274) and Bonanno (e.g. 2014b, 590) on the basis of stylistic considerations of the mosaics and also of the chronology of the earliest surface pottery found by the latter at Gerace.
- 23 Wilson 2014c; 2015, 207–16; 2017, 296–8.
- 24 Its size suggests that it might derive from an impression taken from a signet ring belonging to Philippianus. For an approximately contemporary sealstone (15mm across), with the owner’s name also in monogram form (‘of Terentius?’), see Spier 2007, 50, no. 307 with pl. 37; and cf. also Symmachus, *Ep.* 2.12.1 (before AD 395), on the difficulty of reading his own monogram signature.
- 25 Such a ‘talking *signum*’ very occasionally occurs on brick products near Rome: M. Rutilus Lupus used the wolf, C. Iulius Stephanus chose a crown and M. Flavius Aper a running boar (Bodel 2005). These, however, belong to the first half of the 2nd century AD, more than 200 years earlier than the Gerace stamps.
- 26 Vegetius, *Ars Mulomedicinae* 3.6.2–4 (after AD 383 and before 450); *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium* 65; Symmachus, *Ep.* 6.33 and 42.
- 27 Alföldi 1976, 188, no. 646, with Taf. 205.7; Darder Lissón 1996, 244, 294, no. 2 and 315, no. 128.
- 28 Unfortunately a clandestine excavation, which occurred between our work in 2013 and our return in 2015, destroyed deposits in the northern half of Room 1.
- 29 See references in note 22 above.
- 30 Its eastern end has been destroyed by a former drainage channel (now diverted), the overflowing of which, as noted above, caused the discovery of the site in 1994.
- 31 Wilson 2017, 265–71 and 2018b, 225–40.
- 32 Close parallels for the western half of the mosaic design include examples in Carthage (Maison de Basilica [*sic*], 4th century), and Acholla (Great Baths, c. AD 400); cf. also a villa at Saint-Émilion near Bordeaux, 5th century; references in Wilson 2017, 270, notes 29–31. For parallels in North Africa for the eastern half of the corridor mosaic, cf. Gozlan 1990, 1009–29.
- 33 It is in fact 315mm long, but the mosaicist who laid it was probably not too concerned about a precise measurement. Ktisis: Balty 1992 and 2009. Rome example: Lugli 1957, 221, no. 1 with pl. XXV.1.
- 34 For example, the walls are 59cm wide = 2 Roman feet; the overall north–south measurement of Room 7 including the walls, is 8.88m or 30 Roman feet; Room 8 over the walls is 5.22m = 18 feet. On the other hand, the Attic or Cycladic foot is between 294 and 296mm long, and it is not impossible that the architect at Gerace was using Attic feet rather than Roman. The fact that the personifications of Ktisis holding this rod all occur in the Eastern Empire might strengthen the notion that it is not in fact a Roman unit of measurement that is being depicted, but perhaps a very close Greek equivalent.
- 35 For example, the richly appointed villa of Faragola near Foggia (c. AD 400) lacks a peristyle; the nearest structure visible from its marble-clad dining room was a granary (Volpe and Turchiano 2009, 97 with Tav. II). Another compact non-peristyle villa (in its latest phase) is that of San Giovanni di Ruoti, periods 3a–b (c. AD 400 and 460): Small and Buck 1994, 341, pl. 61; 365–6, pls 85–6.
- 36 It was no longer needed when the much larger bath-house was built 50m up the slope at Gerace (see below).
- 37 J. Ramsay in Wilson 2017, 309–10 (with discussion on 299–303).
- 38 The only comparable example, not yet published, is a 4th-century one from Pietrarossa near Mineo (Catania province), with 30,000 seeds (Castiglioni 2008, 383).
- 39 Kunz 2006, 64–6; cf. also 325–6 for the story of the Rape of Proserpina on the shores of Lago di Pergusa, only 7km north-east of Gerace.
- 40 Wilson 2017, 310–12 (AD 409/537 at 95% probability, but the lamps narrow this to 450/537).
- 41 Wilson 2015, 203–6 with references.
- 42 Wilson 2018b, 227 with fig. 4. For the amphora type, Pieri 2005, 101–14 (I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr Tomoo Mukai).
- 43 *Cylindrus*, the name of a cook in Plautus (*Menaechmi*) and a local aristocrat in 1st-century AD Gortyn in Crete (*Inscriptiones Creticae* IV [1950], no. 330), is otherwise unattested in Sicily.
- 44 Wilson 1990, 313–29; Korhonen 2012.
- 45 Magnetometry was largely used, as the ground is unsuitable to georadar. The total absence of any brick in the bath-house walls is the likely explanation for its invisibility in the geophysics results.
- 46 Wilson 2018b, 246–67 for full details.
- 47 Kienzle 2010, 88; Lancaster 2015, 143; and cf. Horace, *Sat.* I.5.80 for the acrid smoke caused by burning green wood.
- 48 Sacks of fragmentary tubes were weighed and the total divided by the notional weight of an average complete tube (11 complete tubes were weighed to calculate this). The figure of 120 represents only the minimum possible number of tubes: the fragments doubtless belong to many more actual tubes than that.
- 49 Wilson 1992; Storz 1994; Lancaster 2015, 99–128.
- 50 Gentili 1999, 239; but *tubi fittili* are also known from unexcavated rural sites in western Sicily, so more no doubt remain to be found (Wilson 1992, 127).
- 51 A semi-dome over the hot pool alone would have covered c. 4m<sup>2</sup>. To roof a small square room at Bulla Regia occupying 3.24m<sup>2</sup>, where an experimental *tubi fittili* cross-vault was reconstructed in 1976, 944 tubes were needed (Olivier and Storz 1983, 125).
- 52 Pensabene 2013, 292–5 (*rosso antico*), 298–301 (Euboean *cipollino*), 317–48 (Proconnesian) and 360–87 (*pavonazetto*). I am grateful to Patrizio Pensabene (Rome) for checking the identification of the first of these for me.

- 53 This is Type 9.b2 in Bouet's classification (2003, 82–6), 'le *caldarium* à deux *solia* perpendiculaires quadrangulaire et absidal'. Examples are known all over the Empire from the late 1st century AD. In Sicily the arrangement is found in rural baths at (for example) Misterbianco, CT (Wilson 1990, 211 with fig. 171.2) and Torre Rossa near Fiumefreddo, ME (Buda *et al.* 2013, 74–90).
- 54 No earthquake in Sicily is attested by the sources for the second half of the 5th century AD, but Pensabene has noted that the southern baths at the Piazza Armerina villa were suddenly destroyed and the columns of its court overturned soon after the middle of the 5th century, which he attributes to a Vandal incursion (Pensabene 2016, 249, with n. 23). I think such destruction is more plausibly the result of earthquake damage, especially if the toppling of the main peristyle columns at that villa belongs to the same time, as seems likely.
- 55 Pensabene 2010, 12–21, 61–103. For Gerace in the context of other late Roman villas in Sicily, see especially Wilson 2016, 1–25 and Wilson 2018a.
- 56 Wilson 2017, 276–8; African red slip: *ibid.* 308–9, nos 11–13.
- 57 Wilson 2015, 202–3; for the pottery's distribution, Arcifa 2010, 67–77 with fig. 3.
- 58 Pelagatti and Di Stefano 1999, pls 7–8; Wilson 2013, 129–30 with fig. 7.
- 59 Wilson 2018b, 275–7 with fig. 36; for the type Pieri 2005, 132–7. I owe this reference and the identification (as of the Late Roman 4 amphora from the south corridor of Area A) to the expertise of Dr Tomoo Mukai.
- 60 Pelagatti 1972, 100.
- 61 A further kiln was excavated in 2017 (and 2018) in Area F; also used for making tiles, it had three phases of activity, two in the 5th century (not associated with Philipppianus's activity), and one in the 6th; Wilson 2019, 268–75.
- 62 It is not clear if the second L in this word is a straightforward spelling mistake by patron or mosaicist, or whether it might possibly point to a late Latin variant spelling of *meliora* (cf. later the French *meilleur* and Italian *migliore*). I am grateful for the advice, enthusiasm and expertise of Professor Kathleen Coleman (Harvard) in connection with the possible significance of this variant spelling; see now her note in Wilson 2019, 321–3.
- 63 I am very grateful to Professor Michael MacKinnon (Winnipeg) for these identifications.
- 64 Summary in Wilson 2018c, and full details in Wilson 2019 and forthcoming a and b. Cf. also <http://cnrs.ubc.ca/for-undergraduates/archaeological-field-schools/sicily-2017/> and <http://cnrs.ubc.ca/for-undergraduates/archaeological-field-schools/sicily-2018/>.
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## Part 2: Medieval Sicily

### Chapter 12

# Before the Normans: Identity and Societal Formation in Muslim Sicily

Alex Metcalfe  
Lancaster University

#### Contexts and historiography

When the Normans landed in Sicily in 1061 they encountered a mixed population of Arabic-speaking ‘Saracens’ and Christians they called ‘Greeks’. The kingdom of Sicily that emerged 70 years later has been widely studied for its role in the ‘second-phase’ formation of European states and frontiers after the fall of Rome, and because of its intersection with the national histories of France, Italy, Germany, England, Malta and others. For Norman England, it is inconceivable that a history could make only passing mention of the autochthonous population whom the Normans had conquered. But in Sicily, the peoples of the former Byzantine and Muslim island – who were inconveniently different from their new lords in matters of law, manners, customs and speech – have been conveniently forgotten. And while the ‘history of the victors’ has had much to say, it may have spoken too soon, not least because the Normans in the south have always divided opinion. In the present day, they do so precisely over questions about the peoples they ruled. For some, the Norman Conquest was ‘a crusade from the start’.<sup>1</sup> For others, Sicily was a ‘land without crusaders’.<sup>2</sup> Documentary and archaeological sources can be interpreted either way. On the one hand, they can show the rapid imposition of lordship over Muslim communities driven to the brink of destruction, and how forces of Latinisation, irresistible from the mid-1100s, dragged the island back into the political, cultural, linguistic and religious orbit of ‘Western Europe’ on whose margins it has remained. On the other hand, the kingdom’s legacy of art and material culture implies high levels of accommodation that reached out to include a multifaith, multicultural population. To many, this is proof of a tolerant, enlightened and very different type of Norman rulership: one that wittingly and willingly absorbed influences from the cosmopolitan world of the Byzantines and Muslims.

As a result, far more has been said about the construction of Norman rulership and its multifaceted identity in Sicily post-1130 than about the sociopolitical situation that the Normans inherited from the Muslims. This breach is hard to overcome: the Norman kingdom is rich in extant Latin sources; Greek charters are plentiful, especially for the first half of the 1100s, but no administrative or legal documents from the Islamic period survived the conquest. Over the past decade or so, the traditional asymmetry of pre- and post-conquest interests has shifted with an upsurge of research into early Muslim–Christian contacts in Europe. Partly driven by postmodern interests in transculturality, partly by current considerations of *jihād*, Islamisation and immigration, one scholarly result is the gradual elaboration of a historiographical framework that extends beyond Michele Amari’s *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia* to bridge the Islamic and the Norman periods through the medium of the island’s indigenous Muslim and Christian communities.<sup>3</sup>

#### Dynamics of the Muslim conquest

In the two centuries before the Normans it is clear that the key driver of both short- and long-term socioreligious change was the course of the Muslim conquest itself, known to us mainly through the narrative of later Arabic

chronicles. In this respect, there has long been a consensus that regional contrasts across Sicily's population show how Muslim settlement and acculturation never resulted in a homogeneous socioreligious spread across the island. Broadly speaking, the Muslim ground campaigns moved from west to east with settlers following in their wake. This trend continued into the 1100s when al-Idrīsī noted how there were many Ifrīqiyyans around Marsala, which, along with Mazara, was one of the principal ports of entry from North Africa.<sup>4</sup> Conversely, in the north-eastern corner of the island, the relative strength of Sicilian Greek language, Byzantine churches, culture and documentary records, as well as higher proportions of Greek toponyms and personal names, indicates that Christian communities lived there in greater numbers and more conspicuously than in the west.<sup>5</sup> Comprehensive, comparative studies of microtoponymy are likely to fill in important details; they are, however, unlikely to overturn the established conclusions.

Both Christian and Muslim reports of Muslim conquest played to the expectations of their respective audiences of victims and victors when describing the plunder of towns, the sacking of churches, crop-burning, debilitating sieges, tribute payments, population displacement and flight, prisoner-taking and ransoming. While some accounts of devastation and slaughter bear the hallmarks of exaggeration, the frequency and consistency with which they occur does not allow us to discount them all as literary fictions.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the conquest, a recurrent pattern emerged in which we see the death, exile or captivity of Byzantine elites;<sup>7</sup> the execution of male combatants;<sup>8</sup> reprisals after a long blockade;<sup>9</sup> the partial repopulation of a stronghold following its fall;<sup>10</sup> partial demolition after a successful siege,<sup>11</sup> and peace agreed in exchange for tribute or captives, sometimes reckoned in their thousands.<sup>12</sup> If the sources are credited, then it seems fair to assume that there was a high level of material damage in at least some, if not many, places. In conjunction with the grinding down of the Byzantine leadership after successful sieges against larger centres, it is equally fair to assume that this disrupted the Byzantines' capacity to coordinate defensive strategies across the island over time.

The debilitating, but erratic, progress of the so-called *jihād* continued for almost 150 years.<sup>13</sup> In part, this was due to campaigning seasons that were interrupted by changes of governors and frequent struggles within the Muslim army itself. The creeping conquest was also due to the hilly Sicilian terrain and the patchy efficacy of a Byzantine defensive 'network'.<sup>14</sup> Many uncertainties surrounding the extent, function and dating of the Byzantine *kastra* make even generalised claims difficult to sustain. On safer grounds, we know that towns in the west submitted relatively quickly, whereas at least a couple of key forts in the north-east held out till the 960s. Some strongholds at the forefront of conflict were de- and then repopulated; some, like Kassar, were abandoned; others, like Sofiana, carried on much as they had before;<sup>15</sup> many probably never engaged with a Muslim army; others doubtless submitted without a fight. If such a disjointed scenario is accepted, then it is not difficult to account for the development of a mottled patchwork of socioreligious settlement: Muslim, Christian and mixed.

When viewed over the long term, the booty economy caused by the Aghlabids' army opened up a wealth gap between the main faith communities. In the increasingly Muslim west of the island, fed by tribute from Christian towns, immigration from, and trade with, Ifrīqiya boosted supply and demand as it passed through the burgeoning ports on both sides of the Sicilian Channel. In contrast, after the fall of Syracuse in 878, and with it the loss (to both sides) of the Byzantine mint, which effectively underwrote tribute payments, there was little to prevent the decline of once-prosperous Christian communities as transferable wealth was whittled away by emigration to the mainland together with the recurrent exaction of faith-based tribute. Syracuse never really recovered, and the relative dereliction of parts of the Christian north-east, as viewed from the early Norman period, points to a trajectory of economic and demographic decline within the Christian communities. The east–west, Christian–Muslim divide should not be overplayed, but the overall political and economic ascendancy of the Muslims at the expense of the Christian population with its depleted and disempowered leadership is quite evident.

### Metropolitan centres, settlement nucleation and cultural hegemony

In the west of the island, a key driver of change was urbanisation. Palermo, as the primary site of political and cultural hegemony, was the focal point where the wealthy and powerful resided, and where literary culture, law, administration, religion and scholarship were expressed in Arabic by cliques of the educated.<sup>16</sup> Palermo's Muslim population expanded rapidly, but precisely how quickly remains a matter of debate.<sup>17</sup> As a transmitting beacon of political and material culture around the island, Palermo's influence is clearly visible under the Fatimids (910–48), and more clearly still under their loyal deputies from the Kalbid dynasty (948–c. 1053) in a period when we also have firm evidence for complex state-formation and the management of colonial affairs. This included regular forms of taxation and a treasury managed by salaried officials and scribes in a bureaucracy that aspired to a theoretical ideal of centralisation. From the 930s, the seat of government and the ruler's residence were located in the citadel-suburb of the Khālīṣa where troops were also stationed. So, by the time Ibn Ḥawqal visited in the early 970s, he could describe a thriving city with a well-established port, markets and water supplies, and a Muslim character that was imparted by its many mosques and their Arabic-speaking congregations.<sup>18</sup> If the metropolis were to be taken as epitomising Muslim Sicily, then the island's political and sociocultural history could be explained by extension and analogy without having to venture beyond it. However, the main institutions and state apparatus were Palermo-based, and, as the map of Sicily in *The Book of Curiosities* shows, the city appeared in gross disproportion to the rest of Sicily where, if Ibn Ḥawqal was right, very different groups of people lived.<sup>19</sup>

The paucity of reliable evidence for societal formation has tended to produce theory-led research contingent on markers and proxies from settlement archaeology. In tandem with Arabic narrative sources and Sicilian toponymy, this approach seeks to link territorial

organisation, settlement nucleation and identity formation. While recent studies are numerous and thought-provoking, the lack of agreement among archaeologists reveals how methodologically and practically challenging this field of inquiry has become. Given the slim pickings from the sources and the island's famed potential for variation, it may be unwise to overextend any particular model.

Disagreement is not, however, total.

For both historians and archaeologists, attention has focused on the order of the Fatimid caliph al-Mu'izz in 967 to gather the rural population of Sicily into new or redeveloped urban centres in the regions.<sup>20</sup> This was reported almost 400 years later in the chronicle of al-Nuwayrī:

The letter of al-Mu'izz reached the *amīr* Aḥmad informing him of the peace [with the Byzantines] and ordering him to build Palermo's walls and to fortify them. He advised him to build them sooner rather than later, and that he should build in each of the island's provinces a fortified town with a congregational mosque, and that the people of each province should take to living in their [province's] town and not to let them be dispersed in villages. The *amīr* Aḥmad quickly set about the task of building the town walls and sent out elders to every part of the island to attend to the construction.<sup>21</sup>

This mandate came in the wake of the Muslims' decisive campaign victories in eastern Sicily between 962 and 967, and at a time when the Fatimids were setting the colony in order prior to their relocation to Cairo. The caliph's instruction implies that, at the time, state infrastructure in the regions was weak and sizeable nucleated centres were sparse. As a result of archaeological excavations and surveys, many now interpret the apparent formation of large, new unfortified villages, along with reoccupation of some hilltop sites like those at Entella, Calathamet and Segesta-Calatafimi, as a function of the state's intervention in precisely such a provincial reconfiguration.<sup>22</sup> Archaeologists, who are fully cognisant of the *incastellamento* structuralism that frames this debate, have been inclined to date these settlements to the period 950–c. 1030, perhaps with more than half an eye on al-Nuwayrī's account. Thus, for many, a type of *incastellamento* has come to form the theoretical basis for a 'top-down' model of societal formation contingent on Gramsci-esque assumptions about the emulation of politico-religious, economic and sociocultural hegemony.<sup>23</sup>

In Muslim Sicily, such modelling promises more than it can deliver – we know very little of provincial administration under the Fatimids or Kalbids, and even less in the chaotic *tāʿifa* period between c. 1030 and the Norman conquest. Over in Fatimid Ifrīqiya, state officials administered the provinces (*iqḷīms*), or else they were auctioned off with a 'tax-farming' contract to a lord (*ṣāhib al-qabāla*) for a fixed period.<sup>24</sup> We have no idea whether the same applied in Sicily, but the documents of the eminent Fatimid official, Jawdhar (d. 973), show how the decision to appoint a coordinator of taxes for a particular province was a politically sensitive task that could trigger a revolt.<sup>25</sup> The same source also reveals that high-ranking officials – who were not necessarily based in Sicily – were concessionaires and stakeholders in the colony's rural economy.<sup>26</sup> The clearest example we have is that of Jawdhar's own timber-

logging interests, although it is significant that the state seemed to have difficulty pressing into service the labour force required to fell trees for the war effort without causing a riot.<sup>27</sup> During Ibn Ḥawqal's visit to the island in 973, he scathingly commented on the numbers of Sicilian schoolteachers who had engaged in this profession as a 'reserved occupation' in order to avoid being called up to a fort (*ribāt*) to serve in the *jihād*.<sup>28</sup> On occasion, locals were unafraid to run officials out of town, keeping Palermo's relationship with the regions edgy and ill-defined.<sup>29</sup>

In practice, settlement could be a chaotic affair. At Agrigento, a kin group of army veterans, the Banū 'Abd al-Ṣamad, purchased the once decrepit stronghold with cash they had acquired after the first fall of Taormina in 902.<sup>30</sup> Intriguingly, this outright acquisition of land and rights to it was made directly from the state or from state officials: from the *amīr* Ibrāhīm II himself (as the 'Abd al-Ṣamad clan claimed) or from a certain al-Ṭifīfī, whom others claimed was the vendor. The latter may well be the same as Ibn al-Ṭifīfī (or his father), who was attested in the role of a high-ranking civil official – perhaps Palermo's *wālī l-madīna* ('city chief') or *ṣāhib al-shurṭa* ('head of police') – in the same generation and may have died in 890.<sup>31</sup> In any event, the 'Abd al-Ṣamad clan then entered a morass of landholding disputes with chaotic consequences in which written records were nowhere to be seen, either locally or from Palermo, when they were demanded at a state-led inquest. Instead, the word of a local *shaykh* sufficed. The sale of land direct from state to kin group is, however, revealing about how lands came to be acquired and held, not only in the aftermath of conquest, but also at a later date in a state sell-off of estates. The later settlement disputes also reveal the potential for self-regulation and pragmatic autonomy in matters of territorial organisation as well as the freedom from interference by chancery officials or by the state in landholding problems until disputes escalated beyond local control and the army blundered in to provide a solution of sorts.

Revenue from the land that was meant to be passed by landholders to the treasury via officials was not always forthcoming, and the amount payable could be open to discussion. In the time of the last Kalbid *amīr*, Ṣamsām al-Dawla (c. 1040–53), the scribe, poet and landholder, Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, wrote to the *amīr*'s official (*mutawallī*) to explain how he had levelled his land to prepare it for ploughing, enclosed it with a wall to protect the fruit trees and crops, and built a well at great expense.<sup>32</sup> He clearly had many men working in his service, so the estate itself seems to have been settled. Yet, in spite of his efforts, the state had received nothing in land tax (*kharāj*) from the property for years. Such rare insights suggest that the state was not always able to rely on generating large and regular revenues from the land through taxation to bolster treasury coffers.

### Onomastics and local resource management in Muslim western Sicily

An enduring legacy of the Muslim presence in Sicily is its toponymy in which settlements of all sizes took the names of Muslim notables or kin groups.<sup>33</sup> A strong toponomastic tradition continued into the Norman period from when most of the evidence is first attested. Important examples include

the estate of Raḥl Karrām, which was sold for the princely sum of 1,000 *tari* by the Banū Karrām, a kin group that appears to have held the property allodially: an important example of Muslim lordship under Norman rule.<sup>34</sup> To this may be added the estates of Raḥl Ibn Baraka and Raḥl al-Māya, which can be linked to the North African Banū Baraka and Banū l-Māya, whose kin-group members were attested locally in chancery records.<sup>35</sup> This apparent dominance of estates by eponymous Muslim kin groups, some of which had links with the army, accords with the pre-Norman toponomastic record. Indeed, when viewed in greater detail, it is clear that countless localities, natural resources and anthropogenic impacts on the landscape were named after Muslim clans or individuals. Of particular note are names attached to water resources.<sup>36</sup> Unlike the immediate hinterland of Palermo, in which there were lengthy networks of underground water galleries (*qanāt*), in the provinces of western Sicily a simpler system of locally maintained ditches (*khandaq*s) carrying rain, river and spring water supplied the surrounding fields without the need for state intervention or complex coordination of labour and finances.<sup>37</sup> Data relating to lands and resources can be combined with extensive population census lists from the same period.<sup>38</sup> The lists show the wide extent of community leadership and sociopolitical hierarchy in the guise of *shaykhs*, *boni homines*, *gerontes*, trusted witnesses, signatories and, in one case, a reference to a communal council.<sup>39</sup> We also find minor officials, deputies, notaries and religious clerics providing links to tax-collecting agencies, religious infrastructure and the law.<sup>40</sup> When drilling down further, more or less comparable evidence can be discovered that offers a ‘bottom up’ view of estates’ population often headed by a *qā’id* (‘leader’) or *shaykh al-qarya* (‘village headman’).<sup>41</sup> The records show a societal structure based around clans and extended kin groups in which we can even trace families of minor Muslim landholders across three generations.<sup>42</sup> As such, the combined data sets of lands and their inhabitants allow a strong case to be made that many key elements of resource management in the countryside were, de facto, in the hands of resident families and kin groups.

These observations may help to shed light on the cash crisis that befell the Kalbids in the early part of the 1000s. This eventually unhinged Palermo from its provinces, precipitating the collapse of unified Muslim rule. It is striking that the crisis resulted in greater state intervention to exact more tax at the points of production in the rural economy. It was this hapless – and apparently novel – strategy that in 1019 sparked widespread revolt in the countryside of ‘both the great and the small’, who marched on Palermo and besieged the *amīr* in his own palace.<sup>43</sup> However, the late Kalbid crisis also implies that the state’s reach into local and regional affairs had remained hitherto limited. Until that crisis, all indications point to the variety and richness of Sicily’s agriculture. So, if there was limited or, at best, inconsistent state involvement in the organisation of rural settlement or its economic affairs other than to coordinate the collection of taxes, then those who lived in the countryside had achieved their prosperity without the direct aid of state intervention. Such ideas are preliminary and provisional, but the documentary record has much to

offer, and further studies combined with landscape archaeology are likely to reveal more conclusions. This approach offers a less structured view of the population and its perceived relationship to lordship and/or state authority. It casts the spotlight on kin groups as an important data set for societal modelling, at the same time raising the thorny question of whether social organisation, and therefore control over many local matters, in Muslim areas of Sicily was in some sense ‘tribal’.

### Was Sicily ‘tribal’? The question of Arabs and Berbers

For three centuries after the Muslim conquest of North Africa, Arabs had dominated political affairs, commanded the armies and ruled over a diverse miscellany of Amazīgh peoples they pejoratively called ‘Berbers’. Characteristic of the politico-religious dynamics that emerged was the way in which access to power went hand in hand with questions of ethnic difference, religious sectarianism and political dissent. So, had the Ifrīqiyans transferred these dynamics into Sicily with the Muslim conquest? This idea is as old as the Arabic chroniclers themselves, who often attributed internal conflicts in Sicily to struggles between Arab and Berber factions. In the 19th century too, this rivalry served as convenient shorthand for explaining Muslim Sicily’s ethnic composition and its fractious sociopolitical dynamics, particularly in the first three generations after the start of the conquest. For Michele Amari, such conflict was linked to issues of immigration and settlement, with Arabs living mainly in and around Palermo, and Berbers around Agrigento, which he imagined was ‘like the Berber capital’.<sup>44</sup> In support of this, he elicited personal and place names that pointed to Berber clans, tribes and supratribal confederacies. Subsequent research has supplemented this data to the extent that there is now a sizeable, but disparate, body of onomastic evidence for ‘Berbers’ in all walks of sociopolitical life: in the army, as high-ranking officials, and *tā’ifa* rulers in the Islamic period; from humble villeins to landholders, and among pro-Norman ‘tribes’ in the 12th century.<sup>45</sup> This is matched by equivalent onomastic evidence for Arab tribes too.<sup>46</sup> In both cases, we should not be too impressed by the size of the corpus gathered from over three centuries: naming patterns in the Islamic world lent themselves to the preservation of aggrandising lineages, no matter how tenuous such ancestry was. Nevertheless, it is in virtue of this evidence that many are convinced that Muslim Sicily was indeed ‘tribal’. But was it ‘tribal’ in any sense that mattered: that is to say, did Arabs or Berbers act out of a sense of group consciousness based on a perception of ethnic identity?

While the presence of Arabs and Berbers in Sicily is self-evident from names in the historical record, it is unfortunate that the medieval construct of ‘tribes’, ‘peoples’ and ‘Berbers’ underwent little modification between the medieval period and its reanimation in 19th- and 20th-century histories. Not only were most of the main Arabic sources late, but also they tended to follow the stereotypical association of Berbers with violent sedition. Sometimes we see how historical memory of such treachery had improved with age: in a passage that was otherwise copied from other sources, the 14th-century chronicler al-Nuwayrī added that

the assassin of the energetic Arab *amīr* Khafāja ibn Sufyān in 869 was from the Ḥawwāra confederation of Berber tribes, well known for their anti-Arab *kharijism*.<sup>47</sup> More importantly, Arab–Berber conflict, as relayed by the sources, can often be shown to be context-specific, even when the chroniclers recounted events as if they were referring to some wider warfare. An example from the build-up to the *tāʾifa* period shows this quite clearly. In early 1015 the Kalbid *amīr*'s brother 'Alī led a revolt of Berbers and slaves.<sup>48</sup> After (only) eight days the uprising failed and an order was given to 'deport from the island whosoever was a Berber along with their families. Then they expelled them until there was not a single one left'.<sup>49</sup> The chronicler does not specify whether this was some en masse deportation or merely a purge within the army. The former scenario, however, would have been absurdly impractical, and the sense is soon clarified with the remark that the army (*jund*) was then cut in size and recruited locally from 'the people of Sicily'. Indeed, it is striking how many references in the chronicles to some Arab–Berber conflict can be explained by ructions in the army, rather than as ethnic warfare that engulfed the wider population.

Within military hierarchies, category distinctions according to perceived ethnicity certainly *did* matter since they were linked to issues of recruitment, regimental division, commander loyalty, payment and booty distribution. Whether dominated by Arabs under the Aghlabids or by Kutāma Berbers in the Fatimid–Kalbid period, army divisions continued to be made on ethnic lines, alongside faith-based and regional recruitment of 'Slavs' (*Ṣaqāliba*), Christians (*al-Rūm*), sub-Saharan troops (*ʿabīd*) and auxiliary levies raised through conscription. Apart from their obvious role in raiding and conquests, the army and purges within it were closely associated with changes in political power, and were thus noted by chroniclers whose primary stated aim was to account for 'wars, the change of governors and such like'.<sup>50</sup> In terms of payment, analogies with Ifrīqiya and Egypt suggest that the army received salaries supplemented by gifts, booty and landed benefices (*iqṭāʿs*).<sup>51</sup> In the latter case, we know nothing of the terms and conditions of tenure, nor of tax liabilities. However, when disturbances in the army broke out, conflict was usually contained in or around Palermo where the troops were garrisoned. Indeed, we do not hear of powerful *jund* commanders entrenched in their own garrisoned strongholds in the countryside, such as those held by the rebel commander of the *jund*, Maṣṣūr al-Tunbudhī, in Aghlabid Ifrīqiya.

Evident as sporadic Arab–Berber rivalries in the Sicilian army were, we must be cautious about assuming that such ethnic violence was widely replicated beyond the military and across the Muslim population. Not only was much of Sicily's population Christian or newly converted to Islam, but they were also from the island itself, and were not outsider 'others'. Questions of Arab, Berber or North African ethnicity presumably had little direct impact on their own insular and/or communal identities. In addition, the geographical and socio-economic spectrum of Muslim colonists who entered Sicily as farmers, craftsmen, merchants, administrators, scholars or soldiers was wide,

and continued to be so into the early 1200s. As layer upon layer of settlers accreted, any perceived advantage in maintaining some North African 'tribal' affiliation was only likely to have weakened over time. Moreover, the socio-economic drive towards immigration into Sicily, in tandem with the desire of Aghlabid and Fatimid regimes not to replicate in Sicily the politico-religious instability of an ethnically divided Ifrīqiya, may have served to undermine North African 'tribalism' and any strongly held ethnic identities in the colony. That which we can glean about the settlement of anti-Arab *kharijite* Berbers in Sicily seems to bear this out.<sup>52</sup> In North Africa the Ibādī Berbers had repeatedly challenged Arab-Muslim authority, and some at least appear to have found refuge in Sicily after their suppression.<sup>53</sup> In Sicily, however, they played no active political role indicating that they had adopted quietist strategies on their arrival, and that ethno-religious violence in Ifrīqiya had reduced to ethnic tension or less on transfer to Sicily.

The idea of Berber-to-Arab assimilation at a sociocultural level in Sicily finds support in the account of Ibn Ḥawqal, who had heard from several people, including the *qādī* of Palermo, that most of the population were Barqajāna and 'clients' (*mawālī*) of the Muslims who had lost their former identity over time.<sup>54</sup> Here he seems to be referring to the assimilation of an immigrant population from North Africa on the one hand, and of the conquered islanders on the other. The Barqajāna were an obscure and nebulous group of Berbers who had converted late to Islam, and who had perhaps retained both Christian and Latin-speaking elements into the 900s.<sup>55</sup> They were not described as a traditional 'tribe', but were associated with the Ibādīya and the defence of Rustamid Ṭāhart, which was repeatedly attacked by the Fatimids between 910 and 971, during and after which some of its population had migrated to Sicily. If so, then Ibn Ḥawqal in 973 was recording episodes that had occurred within the recent past. His use of a vague and pejorative term may also have been an implicit snipe at the Sicilians for their obscure non-Arab, non-Muslim origins, and the clientage of a convert population.

Palermo's worries about the concentrated settlement of certain groups prompted relocations that can be detected in the documentary record. Initial settlement was by no means permanent as evidence of subsequent movements between estates and across the island in both the Muslim and Norman periods points to repeated disruption. Returning to the troubled settlement around Agrigento, the glimpses we have in the Islamic period suggest a similar picture. In the 960s and 970s veterans were relocated from here by the state to settle in areas depopulated by war: in this case, the former Byzantine strongholds of Rometta, Taormina and Aci.<sup>56</sup> When they lodged an objection to this on the grounds that 'we are fellow kinsmen (*ahl jild*), so put us in same place', they were transferred across the island to Syracuse instead.<sup>57</sup> The idea that the state had deliberately adopted a strategy of splitting and resettling groups to and from problem areas is a tempting one. As ever, corroborating evidence is limited, but it is certainly not contradicted by data from the early Arab–Norman period. Here an Arabic population register (*jarīdat al-rijāl*) recorded minor

landholders at Aci.<sup>58</sup> It was issued in 1095, but it was compiled and updated from older data. While some ‘tribal names are attested, there is no indication of any ‘tribal clustering’ or predominance of either Arabs or Berbers.

The hypothesis that settlers’ sense of ethnic or ‘tribal’ difference gradually dissolved on or after entry to Sicily, or else that ethnic identity from outside the island had no real relevance over time to the established sociopolitical order, helps to explain why the dynamics of ethnic violence that were characteristic of North Africa were not reproduced with the same intensity in melting-pot Sicily. But if this were the case, then why did Berber names persist, for example, among Sicily’s elites?

### The Arabicised Berbers of the *tāʾifa* period

Much of our information concerning Sicilian Muslim elites comes indirectly from Ibn al-Qaṭṭāʿ (1041–c. 1116), whose works, including a ‘History of Sicily’ (*Tārīkh Ṣiqillīya*), which must have been composed during or soon after the Norman Conquest, are almost completely lost.<sup>59</sup> The surviving extracts of his work mainly record Sicilian Muslim literati from his own lifetime, and thus they overlap with the Norman Conquest and comital periods. Among those in late Kalbid and *tāʾifa* circles were men of consequence with Berber tribal names, known for their poetry written in elegant Arabic. Of these, a few examples stand out, including the secretary (*kātib*) Muḥammad Ibn al-Qarqūdī, who was praised by Ibn al-Qaṭṭāʿ, who may have known him personally and reported that he held great sway.<sup>60</sup> We also find the *qāʾid* Abū Muḥammad Ibn Mankūd, whose delicate Arabic verse about nymphs on a water lily survives.<sup>61</sup> Evidently, some Berbers at the Arab Kalbid ‘court’ were high-office holders too: the *qāʾid* Abū l-Futūḥ, son of *qāʾid* Badīr al-Maklāti who had the honorific epithet ‘pillar of the state’ (*sanad al-dawla*), was the ruler’s ‘chamberlain’ (*ḥājib al-sultān*).<sup>62</sup> Another, Abū Zayd al-Ghumārī, was even commissioned to write a chronicle of the island, showing a late local interest in the recording (legitimation?) of a dynasty as it neared the point of its obliteration.<sup>63</sup>

A telling indicator of Berber-to-Arab acculturation can be seen in the language situation in Sicily when compared to that of North Africa or al-Andalus. It is well known that later Sicilian and Maltese dialects are devoid of any detectably significant Berber substratum.<sup>64</sup> Instead, the enduring presence of Arabic loan terms suggests that the wider population had used Arabic, not Berber, as the preferred medium of communication. Not only was Arabic the prestige language of the island’s Muslim rulers in whose image the colony had been forged, but also its adoption as a lingua franca by the large Christian population facilitated its spread. In a crowded and competitive language situation in which plurilingualism was commonplace, the accelerated effect of Arabic’s dominance was to relegate Berber to the status of a short-lived, low-prestige bundle of dialects.<sup>65</sup> However, it is hard to believe that Berber dialects were not spoken at all, especially by many first-generation settlers from North Africa.<sup>66</sup> Here, though, it is worth noting from survivals in later Sicilian dialect that, even in the countryside of western Sicily, the language of farming, irrigation and crops was Arabic, not Berber.<sup>67</sup> As such, it

seems that dialects of Berber found it increasingly difficult to compete over time. By the early 1000s, the demographic and political drivers that had guided the flow of acculturation in Sicily produced high-ranking notables, some of whom, as we have seen, were Berber in name only. Otherwise, they were Arabicised in language, culture and political outlook. In the Norman period the same conclusion might be reached of the Ḥammūdids, a branch of whom claimed hereditary leadership of the Sicilian Muslims, but whose distant ‘Berber’ ancestry played no obvious role in garnering political support in Sicily.<sup>68</sup> The island thus appears to have developed along quite different lines to that of North Africa or al-Andalus where there remained an enduring ethnic and ‘tribal’ dimension to politics and society.

### Peoples of the island: becoming ‘Sicilian’ and being a local

In terms of insular regional identity, it was not uncommon to find individuals with names containing references to some ancient Arab tribe or to the island itself: for example, the scribe Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ṣiqillī al-Anṣārī; the scholars ‘Alī al-Rabīʿī al-Ṣiqillī and Aḥmad al-Qurayshī Ibn al-Ṣiqillī; or the poet Ibn Ḥamdīs al-Azdī al-Ṣiqillī.<sup>69</sup> Nor was it unusual to find the demonym ‘Sicilian’ in naming strings alongside Arabic names: its use was not confined to Muslim émigrés and notables, but was also found in a cross-section of the population. If such data is admissible as an expression of regional identity, then numerous references in the onomastic record drawn from a diverse range of documents indicate a sense of ‘Sicilianness’ in the Muslim period, especially among the Muslim communities.<sup>70</sup> This coexisted with confessional, socio-economic, sectarian and ethnic divisions, but arguably transcended them since such an overarching identity was more likely to have been inclusive and binding, rather than exclusive and divisive. The earliest evidence for the emergence of some common notion of regionality that set the islanders apart from outsider ‘others’ is found in *The Cambridge Chronicle*, most likely the work of a 10th-century Christian, probably from the island itself.<sup>71</sup> Referring to the year 889/90, it reported that ‘the Sicilians revolted against the people of Ifrīqiya’ in a conflict that was reframed centuries later by Muslim sources as an Arab–Berber struggle. In both the Islamic and Norman periods repeated reference was made to ‘the people of Sicily’ (*ahl al-Ṣiqillīya*), often in juxtaposition to ‘the people of Ifrīqiya’ (*ahl Ifrīqiya*). Sometimes this referred to a select group among the island’s notables, but otherwise its intended meaning was general. This sense of regional difference between the island and the African mainland could only have grown stronger after the Fatimids’ relocation to Egypt from 969, and the consequent political division of Kalbid Sicily from Zirid Ifrīqiya. By 982, the Sicilians were appointing their own senior judiciary without deference to Ifrīqiya, showing a clear degree of separation and independence among religious scholars too.<sup>72</sup>

When the political system fragmented, the mercurial nature of the islander’s politics revealed an introspective focus on parochial, microregional concerns. During the civil war or *tāʾifa* period, factional leaders were related by marriage, having presumably adopted this strategy to bind authority around themselves.<sup>73</sup> But there was clearly no

successful appeal that could be raised to ‘Sicilianness’ or indeed to any wider cause or ideology in order to keep out the Normans. Tellingly, what mattered above all was the need for self-preservation at a local level. In a well-known episode in the early phases of the conquest, Muslims and Christians banded together to blockade the Normans in their own stronghold at Troina during the winter of 1062–3, fearing that their presence and conduct was detrimental to their shared concerns.<sup>74</sup> If not motivated by a sense of regionality here, then at least common local interests stirred action against outsider ‘others’. When insurrection broke out against the Normans, it was contained within a particular zone.<sup>75</sup> Disturbances were typically one-off events that took place in a single settlement where motives for action were the defence of local interests against outsiders or were provoked by personal grudges.<sup>76</sup> The overriding concern for survival in times of crisis can also be seen in a parallel example from Muslim Malta during 1053/4, where the socioreligious order was overturned for entirely pragmatic reasons, when non-Muslim slaves were manumitted, allowed to share the community’s wealth, and to marry the Muslims’ daughters on condition that they would defend the island’s only town from Christian attack.<sup>77</sup>

In both the Muslim and Norman periods, being considered Sicilian by others was an important issue to the tax-paying population and to the treasury alike, since it was linked to the fiscal question of whether settlers were established on the land or if they had some tax exemption because they were not. Claiming to be a local was a way in which smallholders were distinguished from immigrant colonists. An important episode from 1035/6 reveals how the Kalbids proposed that ‘the people of Ifrīqiya’ should be exempt from the land tax (*kharāj*) whereas ‘the people of Sicily’ were required to pay it.<sup>78</sup> The fierce discussion that followed revealed the state’s determination to link tax liability with regionality, even when the locals claimed that the two communities were no longer able to be distinguished from one another due to intermarriage.<sup>79</sup> The outcome of this episode was not made explicit, but presumably the state pressed home its intention by separating those already established on the land (that is to say, ‘Sicilians’) from outsiders to the area, whether new arrivals from overseas or those not already listed in the record books. In the Norman period too, the compilation of registers written in Arabic discriminated between newcomers, who were often marked out by their North African names (*nīsbas*), and those who were already on the land. Indeed, recording this demographic and fiscal data became a primary concern of the chancery office of the *Dīwān al-Ma‘mūr*.<sup>80</sup>

From the early 1000s, the difficulty in determining what or who counted as ‘local’, ‘indigenous’ or ‘Sicilian’ is itself revealing for what it says about the accretion of different layers of settlement at the base of which was an autochthonous population of Christians. The Christians’ fiscal and religious position under the Muslims is more supposed than demonstrable, but as monotheists who had submitted to Islamic rule they became *dhimmīs* (literally, ‘safeguarded’ or ‘protected’, that is to say, under Islamic law), paying the religious tax of the *jizya* in return for the right to practise their faith and law.<sup>81</sup> The situation for

conquered Muslims in the Norman period was broadly analogous: faith communities could purchase a tolerable degree of autonomy from state interference. In return, the rulers ‘protected’ them and taxed them on the basis of their faith. In Sicily, however, even normally neat and clear-cut boundaries, such as professed belief, were subject to distortion and deconstruction.

### The Sicilian *meshumadim*: an island of converts?

Alongside ethnic and regional identities, the religious base of the island experienced radical long-term change during the Muslim period. It is notable how Muslim scholars were typically disparaging about Sicily’s population implying that acculturation to Muslim norms and expectations in an island that was still seen as peripheral to the Islamic world was as slow as it was widespread. Instead of portraying a society formed by the immigration of Muslims on the one hand and the displacement of Christians on the other, Muslim sources assumed that, for the most part, the autochthonous population had remained *in situ* during the long period of Muslim conquest and settlement.<sup>82</sup>

Important evidence for a mixed-faith population comes from Ibn Ḥawqal’s eyewitness account of 972/3 in which he noted the extent and erroneousness of marriages with Christian women, calling the Sicilian Muslims outside Palermo *musha‘midhūn*, an obscure and pejorative term borrowed from the Hebrew *meshumadim*, which referred to those who had converted or apostasised from their religion.<sup>83</sup> He added that they knew nothing of their religious obligations: ‘they do not pray, perform ritual ablutions, pay the alms tax nor go on pilgrimage’.<sup>84</sup> This scenario suggests that there was a high degree of cultural interplay over time between socioreligious groups that were more usually differentiated by language and belief. This hypothesis underpins the view that by the end of the 900s many Sicilian Christians had adopted Islam, perhaps in large numbers (even if superficially and without great knowledge of the religion), while there were many others who were Arabised in manners and dress, and/or Arabised in speech, but who had not converted to Islam.<sup>85</sup> The result was the formation of yet another ill-defined group with mixed memories and mixed identities: Arab-Christians, Mozarabs, Melkites – there is no satisfactory term of reference for this important sector of the Sicilian population whom the Normans would come to call ‘Greeks’, since Greek was the language of their liturgy.<sup>86</sup> In both the Islamic and Norman periods this important group provided linkage, thus strengthening socioreligious and cultural cohesion, between and across communities that were in continual flux.

### Fictive kinships, clientage and social networking strategies

In the Islamic period the Christian population diminished in the face of a shifting demographic balance, especially during the long conquest phase when Muslim soldiers had the possibility of generating networks of extended family members through marriages, concubines and clientage. A scenario of societal formation by patronage and conversion is known from other regions into which the Muslims had expanded by conquest, although the precise processes of it

are often hidden from view.<sup>87</sup> As we shall see, Sicily yields some precious examples of fictive kinship.

There were obvious socio-economic advantages for Christians and Muslims in belonging to a large and/or powerful kin group, and social networking strategies, both lateral and vertical, are evident in cases of patronage, intermarriage, 'clientage' and religious conversion.<sup>88</sup> The implication of Ibn Ḥawqal's remark that Sicily's population were 'clients (*mawālī*) of the Muslims who had lost their former identity over time' is that many among the autochthonous people had attached themselves to Muslim families.<sup>89</sup> Not all *mawālī* were Sicilians, nor were they all converts, although it is probably fair to assume that most of them were in the context of Islamic Sicily.<sup>90</sup> Clientage within the Muslim community could also cut across ethnic divisions, as the example of the first emir of Bari (842–c. 852) suggests, since he may have been of Berber origin, but attached to an Arab family.<sup>91</sup> The evidence for *mawālī* in the wider society is thin in the extant sources. In the political field an illuminating episode involving 'clients' followed the appointment of a *mawālā* called Ya'īsh as a bureaucratic governor of Sicily in 969. He was a client of the Kalbids, but quickly lost control when fighting broke out between his clan and *mawālī* supporters of the Kutāma, the latter suffering casualties not only at Palermo, but also at Syracuse.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, throughout the Muslim period *mawālī* are detectable at a political level, often with deputising roles in the administration and army.

Evidence for extended kin groups at a more modest social level exists for the Norman period too, when we find many *aribbā'* (singular, *rabīb*, 'stepsons' or 'foster sons') registered in census lists. In Greek they were known by the equivalent term *πρόγονοι*. They were attached to Muslim *arbāb* (singular, *rabb*), literally 'foster fathers', often with the sense of 'lords', 'masters' or patron figures.<sup>93</sup> Although the *aribbā'* constituted only a small minority of the overall population, they appear in sufficient numbers to suggest that they could not all have been children from former marriages. A more likely scenario is that they also included miscellaneous relatives or those who had come to be considered as such. Near-contemporary evidence for familial formation from the Cairo Geniza points to a similar conclusion.<sup>94</sup> In Sicily, Ibn Ḥawqal disparagingly said of the Sicilian *arbāb* in the countryside that they were *al-ʿajam* ('not Arabic speakers'), who muttered unintelligibly and were not mentioned in any holy scriptures.<sup>95</sup> Here, we can see clear similarities with the *meshumadim*, strengthening the links between conversion, clientage and socioreligious change.

Further evidence for kin-group extension is found in two instances of 'blood brotherhood' from the Norman period. These struck the Latin sources in which they were recorded as unusual, but they were suggestive of a long continuity of local custom. They occurred in extrafamilial contexts and were concluded for military, socio-economic and/or political expediency. The first relates to the year 1072, during the Norman Conquest, when 'a certain Saracen called Ibrāhīm made an agreement with Serlo [Count Roger I's nephew]. Each swore to take the other as his adopted brother, *as was the custom of theirs*' [my italics].<sup>96</sup> The cooperative, interfaith nature of this bond is noteworthy, but it is unclear whose

custom this was. Kin-formation of this type has no standing in Islamic law, and the union lacks the spiritual dimension of Byzantine ritual brotherhood or *adelphopoeisis*.<sup>97</sup> However, the idea that this was an insular practice is supported by a similar union from the mid-1150s when the chief minister, Maio of Bari, and Hugh the archbishop of Palermo 'formed an alliance of blood-brotherhood *in accordance with the Sicilians' custom* [my italics], and bound themselves with a mutual oath that each would support the other in every way'.<sup>98</sup> It would seem that these were not isolated examples. Rather, clientage and fictive kinships of this type had evolved as a customary networking strategy designed to cut across social, political and religious boundaries. Indeed, they continued at the highest levels as shown by Roger II's adoption of a Muslim called Aḥmad, who converted and changed his name to match that of his new spiritual 'father'.<sup>99</sup>

### Religion, demography and gender balance

Ibn Ḥawqal's account indicates that interfaith marriage and processes of Christian–Muslim acculturation were gendered: in mixed marriages with Christian women, girls were brought up as Christians like their mothers; boys were brought up as Muslims like their fathers.<sup>100</sup> It was an extraordinary claim, but there is support from Greek sources for a gendered dimension to interfaith relations in both Sicily and its neighbouring frontier zone, Calabria, where pockets of Muslim and/or Arabicised soldiers, slaves and settlers were attested between the 9th and 12th centuries.<sup>101</sup> Back in the 800s, the issue of interfaith marriages had been raised by Leo, the archbishop of Reggio. He expressed his concerns to Photius, the patriarch of Constantinople, and in a reply received between 880 and 886, instructional advice was clearly set out.<sup>102</sup> Of particular relevance were that children born of mixed marriages should be baptised if the mother so requested; in Muslim-held territories, baptism could even be performed by laymen, and mothers should bring up their children as Christians wherever possible. In general, the tone was sympathetic towards those who found themselves in the service of Muslims. The forgiving assumption was that they were unwilling partners who should keep their faith if their personal circumstances did not make it impossible for them to do so. The correspondence not only corroborates evidence for interfaith marriages, but it also reveals a determined stratagem, with particular emphasis on the dutiful roles of mothers, to preserve links with Christianity between generations.

Interfaith mingling even caught the romantic imagination: from the verses of Sicilian jurist Abū Mūsā ʿĪsā bin al-Mun'im on his yearning for Christian girls,<sup>103</sup> to the theme of frontier folk born of double descent in the adventures of Digenēs Akritēs in the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>104</sup> These latter tales were widely circulated and a manuscript copy was made in the Terra d'Ótranto. Supporting evidence for child-rearing in interfaith unions comes from the Greek life of John Theristis (d. 1054).<sup>105</sup> He was brought up in Palermo after his mother was abducted in a Muslim attack on Calabria. She was from a noble Christian background, but after her capture she was

married into a powerful Muslim family. Her husband taught his son the ways of Islam; she gave her son a Christian education.<sup>106</sup> Thus, both contemporary Greek and Arabic sources offer evidence that points to a wider phenomenon of union between Muslim men and Greek-rite Christian women. On the other hand, within the Muslim population, where men were the primary transmitters of faith, language and inherited wealth, it was the male bloodline that mattered.<sup>107</sup> But within mixed-faith households, women were the guardians of Greek-rite Christianity in the face of declining numbers of increasingly Arabicised adherents.

### The survival and revival of Greek in Sicily

The survival situation for Greek in Muslim Sicily was very different from either that of high-prestige Arabic or low-end Berber. We do not know for sure which languages and dialects were used at the time of the Muslim conquest, but there are likely to have been several types, including vulgar late Latin, Italo-Greek and Byzantine Greek: the latter especially among clerics, officials and the educated. Knowledge of written forms of Greek connected its users with the language of liturgy, the gospels and local administration, at least in parts of the Val Démone. The decline of Sicilian monasteries undoubtedly weakened the fabric of Christian society over time, but the persistence of Greek, especially among literate and spiritual leaders, was an important and defiant symbol of Christian faith and culture under the Muslims, with whom they acted as intermediaries.<sup>108</sup> As such, Greek – in spoken, written or transliterated forms – was not destined to die out as the expression of a subjugated or assimilated people. On the contrary, it was sufficiently robust to have exerted an influence on Sicilian Arabic at both vernacular and written levels, its presence in loan words forming a unique dialect of Maghribi Arabic, sometimes referred to as Siculo-Arabic.<sup>109</sup> As for the spoken language of North African immigrants, substantive details for the medieval Maghrib lie largely beyond the reach of researchers due to the scarcity of good data from the region. However, it is of note that in the later 900s the well-travelled Levantine geographer, al-Muqaddasī, struggled to understand Maghribī Arabic while also suggesting that some forms of Romance dialects persisted there, presumably among Christians or erstwhile Christians: a point that al-Idrīsī corroborated two centuries later for the Latin-speaking Afāriqa population that persisted in the outlying Tozuer (Tūzir) oasis in southern Ifrīqiya.<sup>110</sup>

In Sicily itself, Arabic–Greek bilinguals never seemed difficult to find, especially along the fringes of the Christian and Muslim communities. Notable literary results of this interaction include the 10th-century Greek translation of a major medical treatise, the *Zād al-Musāfir*, as well as the work of Dioscurides, and the Arabic–Greek text of Luke’s Gospel, both languages of which were written by the same scribe in 1043.<sup>111</sup> Bilingual Arabic–Greek emissaries, spies and sailors were used during the Norman Conquest.<sup>112</sup> What is striking is how Arabic–Greek bilingualism was apparent across a wide range of different sociolinguistic levels, from high to low.

Given Sicily’s and southern Italy’s social, religious and linguistic pluralism over a long period, it is unsurprising to

find allographic texts, that is to say, texts written with a character set more often associated with a different language. In such cases, it was the letters of the script, not the language itself, that conveyed a sense of identity. Thus, in the same way that Jews wrote Arabic using Hebrew letters, so too we find Italo-Romance written in Greek script; Greek written in Latin letters; and Arabic expressed in Greek characters.<sup>113</sup> This practice, which was not unique to the island, prefigured later movements in the region, most obviously in the development of Maltese, a dialect of Maghribi Arabic written in Latin letters, as well as local forms such as Sardinian expressed in Greek characters.<sup>114</sup> In this light, the Norman kings’ use of bi-, tri- or quadrigraphic texts – in which each of the kingdom’s faith groups was denoted by the letters in which their holy books were written – is less novel than it may sometimes seem.

### The Sicilian Jewish communities

Until the late 15th century, Sicily was home to large and thriving communities of Jews who were engaged in a wide range of activities, not least in urban, intellectual and commercial circles.<sup>115</sup> Under the Muslims and Normans they were among the *jizya*-paying *dhimmī* population and are known to us through the Cairo Geniza documents, from which we learn of their trading links with Ifrīqiya, al-Andalus and Egypt.<sup>116</sup> In the late Islamic period of the 1060s, we also see an important, but rare, venture into the political arena when Jewish merchants supported the brief rise to power at Palermo of Ibn al-Bā’bā’, who opposed the Normans’ loyal Muslim ally, Ibn al-Thumna.<sup>117</sup> Perhaps for this reason, the Jews were slow to return after the civil war and conquest periods, and, unlike the Muslims, they never had the ear of the Norman rulers.

Our knowledge of the Sicilian Jews is supplemented by charter materials and miscellaneous works such as that of Benjamin of Tudela, who noted in the 1170s that the Jewish community of Palermo was far larger than anywhere else in the Italian Peninsula.<sup>118</sup> The similarity of Sicilian Jews to Muslims and Arab-Christians often makes their identification difficult in the sources, not only because they spoke Arabic and were typically bilingual, but also because they tended to choose names from an Old Testament repertoire. Until recently, it was argued that the Jews of Sicily were primarily Arabic-speaking and used Romance dialects only sparingly. However, the emergence of new evidence has fundamentally undermined these old ideas.<sup>119</sup> The sociocultural proximity of the Sicilian Jews to their neighbours offers an important indicator of assimilation and a model of acculturation, often transmitted through the medium of extended families and kin groups, thus providing another important example of the immersion of a religiously distinct community into a plurilingual melting-pot culture.<sup>120</sup>

### The reconfiguration of politico-religious power

The muted testimony of narrative sources towards the end of Muslim rule masks the reasons behind its political fragmentation. The Muslim chroniclers encouraged their readers to imagine that the Kalbids’ inconsistent leadership, their overspending and lack of political ambition, authority

and credibility were undermined by infighting and by Byzantine and Ifrīqiyan interventions, while political stability was punctuated by civil strife, tax revolts and insurrections in the army.<sup>121</sup> When the vital, but delicately balanced, flow of wealth from a once-vibrant, boom-and-bust economy began to falter, the island spiralled into a vicious circle of fiscal and military crises that led to civil war from the mid-1030s, triggering a political collapse into mutually hostile, but equally feeble, statelets. Unlike the *tāʾifa* period in al-Andalus, the Sicilian fragmentation of political power resulted in a ‘dark age’, confirmed by the absence of any significant commercial, religious, artistic or literary activity, with the fleeting exception of Mazara. This helps to explain why the Norman kings later had to bring in highly skilled Muslim artisans from abroad and, in so doing, they effectively reimported Islamic artistic influences into their new royal palaces.<sup>122</sup> By the 1050s, when the civil war had worsened, many merchants left in search of new markets, and Muslims who could afford to leave the island often did so.<sup>123</sup> For their part, the *tāʾifa* lords who emerged were weak: none was able to raise an effective army on his own; all went in search of allies wherever they could find them, and each was overwhelmed by them.

### The Norman Conquest and the Christian revival

From the 1060s, the arrival of Norman knights decisively changed the balance of power through their military prowess and ad hoc alliances with both Muslim and local Christian factions. The Normans attacked through Messina and the Achilles heel of the Val Démone, exacerbating the old regional–religious divide across the island and paving the way for ‘Latin’ settlers from the south Italian mainland. The extent to which the Sicilian Christians undermined the coherence of the Kalbid regime is unclear, but the rapidity with which Messina and areas of eastern Sicily fell during Maniakes’ conquest expedition of 1038–42 suggests that the Christians had offered their support to the Byzantine forces. Within the Muslim elites, the effect of piecemeal conquest between 1061 and 1090 further fragmented their political unity, realigning the loyalties of the local population as it did so. As power continued to dissipate from the centre and to accumulate at the margins, those who were able to command local influence and respect as well as offer logistical support and diplomatic skills were sought out and rewarded.

The absence of any recognised political authority, and the breakdown of administrative structures prior to, and during, the Norman Conquest, posed serious practical problems of governance in its aftermath.<sup>124</sup> The solutions that the Normans adopted set in motion slow and radical change to the political, socioreligious and landholding base of the island with their creation of large, Latin-rite foundations endowed with extensive landed properties, privileges and exemptions. ‘Latin’ Christian settlers began to enter Sicily from the mainland as privileged colonists, although relatively few *castra* were conceded from the counts’ personal demesne of Calabria and Sicily to Norman knights or to those who had fought with them. Alongside this strategy was the patronage of Sicilian Greek-rite churches, which served to reinvigorate Greek monasticism on the

island in the early Norman period, when at least some Sicilian monks had Arabic names suggesting that they were Arabised.<sup>125</sup> In addition, scribes, clerics and those with relevant administrative experience arrived from former Byzantine Calabria with which the north-east of Sicily had maintained contact. In this potentially volatile, post-conquest environment – and at a time when loyalty was being rewarded and favours returned – there remained an urgent need to find trustworthy personnel with bilateral influence across Muslim and Christian communities, and to seek out those with the *savoir-faire* to liaise, organise and oversee the management of conquered lands and men. For their part, the Normans could not, and did not, import Latin notaries and officials because they were not familiar with Arabic, local laws or *sui generis* ‘Sicilian’ customs. Thus, from the early 1090s we see the rise of Arabic-speaking ‘Greek’ Christians who feature as *amīrs*, *qāʾids*, strategots and scribes in the comital administration and entourage of the Norman leaders at itinerant assemblies, boundary inquests and cadastral surveys.<sup>126</sup> Unsurprisingly, some of the earliest comital diplomata of the Norman period recorded grants of lands and men in bilingual confirmations written in Arabic and Greek, a practice that was revived post-1130 and endured thereafter. Until 1124, one of the highest ranking of such officials was Christodoulos, who in Arabic was called ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Naṣrānī.<sup>127</sup> It is likely he was Sicilian and had received the honorific title of ‘protonobilissimos’ from the Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, written on purple vellum in gold letters in 1109, at a time when the Byzantines may still have harboured hopes of reviving their influence on the island.<sup>128</sup> Such was Christodoulos’ power that he was said to have shared absolute authority with Count Roger II himself. However, the most enduringly powerful, Arabic-speaking Christian of this period was George of Antioch.<sup>129</sup> He arrived from Ifrīqiya in 1108, having worked for the Zirid chancery. In Sicily he can be seen in military, religious and civil capacities, and was one of the most lasting and influential forces to shape Sicilian rulership under Roger II.

Sicilian Christians, who had remained at the socioreligious and linguistic margins during the Islamic period, had not been conspicuous as political playmakers under the Muslims. However, the shifting peripheries of conquest uncovered their extent and renewed vigour indicating that the population of Sicily, even in the late Islamic period, still contained large contingents of non-Muslims as well as those who had converted to Islam, perhaps more from socio-economic expediency than religious zeal, over the course of the previous century or so. In the uncertain context of the Norman Conquest, it was their empowerment and inclusion in executive decision-making that, combined with the cooperation of the Normans’ Muslim allies, account for the mixed Arabic and Greek character they imparted to early Norman rulership on the island.

As for the island’s Muslims, we find scattered references to their conversion throughout the Norman period, in particular of those in positions of authority and influence within their communities.<sup>130</sup> Here it is possible to see an important connection between kin groups, community

leadership and a ‘top-down model’ of religious conversion of a type that was clearly spelled out by Ibn Jubayr at the end of his journey across Sicily in 1184–5. While in Trapani, he stayed with Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥammūdī, the ‘leader of the Sicilian Muslims’, which was a role he had inherited from his father, and quite possibly from the lineage of the Hammudid *taifa* rulers of Málaga, who were said to have settled in Sicily after they lost power in al-Andalus in the 1050s.<sup>131</sup> During their conversations about the pressure on Muslim leaders to apostasise, Ibn Jubayr said that if Abū l-Qāsim were to convert, then every Muslim on the island would follow suit.<sup>132</sup> The claim is doubtless exaggerated, but the hegemonic, ‘top-down’ process of socioreligious change away from Islam is perfectly plausible in the context of Sicily in the later 1100s.

The provisional model of historical change presented here has sought to show how the socioreligious base of the island had been in continual flux for over 200 years before the Norman Conquest in 1061. It had given rise to powerful dynamics of societal formation that could both attract and absorb from outside and transform from within to produce high levels of transcultural convergence in key markers of identity: ethnic, regional, religious, cultural and linguistic. It was into this richly mixed and unfamiliar environment that the first two or three generations of Normans were assimilated before the kingdom of Sicily was created in 1130. Indeed, without the collaboration of autochthonous factions of Muslims and Christians, it is unlikely that the Norman Conquest and the subsequent pacification of the island could ever have been achieved in the first place.

## Notes

- For a recent example, see Chevedden 2010, 191–225. For a more balanced analysis, see Loud 2000, 146–85; for particular reference to the Muslims, see Metcalfe 2009, 88–124; Nef 2011a, 21–63; and Wolf 2018, 169–217.
- The title and thesis of Giunta and Rizzitano 1967 monograph, *Terre senza crociati*. Similar sentiments can be found as early as the 1800s, and largely survived the 1900s: for Haskins, ‘nowhere else [except Sicily] did Latin, Greek, and Arabic civilization live side by side in peace and toleration’, see Haskins 1915, 235. For others, Sicily ‘stood forth in Europe . . . as an example of tolerance and enlightenment’, see Norwich 1992, 355.
- For monograph studies dealing with the Muslims in Sicily, see Amari 1933–9; Giunta and Rizzitano 1967; Gabrieli and Scerrato 1979; Maurici 1999; Johns 2002; Metcalfe 2009; Nef 2011a; Chiarelli 2011; Vanoli 2012; see also the important collection of articles in Nef and Prigent 2010, and Nef and Ardizzone 2014.
- Al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*, in Amari, M. (ed.). *Biblioteca arabo-sicula*, 2 vols and appendix, Turin and Rome, 2nd revised edn (Arabic), Rizzitano, U., Borruso, A., Cassarino, M. and De Simone, A. (eds) 1982. 2 vols, Palermo 1982), 1, 50; and Amari, M. and Rizzitano, U. (eds) 1987–8. *Biblioteca arabo-sicula*, 2nd revised edn (Italian), 2 vols, Palermo, 1, 79. Henceforth, *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.) and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.).
- For the displacement of Greek monks to the north-east of the island and to Calabria, confirmed by mainland sources, see Da Costa-Louillet 1959–60, 89–173. The case for large-scale Greek emigration, as once made by L.-R. Ménager (Ménager 1958, 747–74), is not as widely accepted as once thought. On the Greeks of south Italy and Sicily in general, see the more recent works of Cosentino 2008, and Peters-Custod 2009.
- For example, St Vitalis received a Christian education at Castronovo in the 900s (Bolland *et al.* 1865, 9.3, 26); other saints were originally from Corleone, Collesano and Enna; the church at Petralia was mentioned in the 980s, see al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 672 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 25. Petralia had a mixed Muslim–Christian population at the time of the Norman Conquest, see Malaterra 1927–8, 2.20, 35. For the possibility of an active bishopric at Trápani in the 900s, see Maurici 2002, 33. A quarter in or near Palermo called the *Kamīsat al-farūḥ* (‘the church of joy’) was both ‘thriving and populous’ in the Islamic period, see Rapoport and Savage-Smith 2014, no. 133, at 136 (map), 138 (Arabic) and 466 (English). For Christians near Agrigento, and the church of St Cyriacus outside the walls of Palermo, see Malaterra 1927–8, 2.18, 35 and 2.45, 53.
- For the Byzantine governor of Palermo exiled in 831, see Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil al-ta’rīkh*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 272 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 369; on the capture of a patrician and family at Castrogiovanni in 859, *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 280 and (It.) 1, 380; on the violent death in 902 of Procopius, the bishop of Taormina, see John the Deacon 1878, chapter 60, 453–5. See also Amari 1933–9, 2, 103–5. During the capture of Malta in 869, its lord (Ambrose?) was taken prisoner, see al-Ḥimyarī 1975, 520. See also the letter of Theodosius on the aftermath of the fall of Syracuse in 878 in which civic, ecclesiastical and community leaders were rounded up and executed. Others were transported to Palermo and imprisoned where they met the bishop of Malta. They were only released when a ransom had been paid six years later. Zuretti 1910, 1, 165–73; Lavagnini 1959–60, 267–79.
- Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 280 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 380 at Castrogiovanni in 859; *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 290 and (It.), 1, 398 for en masse executions of captives in 881/2 and the transportation of 3,000 heads to Palermo from fighting around Taormina; *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 288 and (It.), 1, 394 for the execution of male combatants in 902 also at Taormina.
- Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 272–3 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 369 after the fall of Palermo.
- Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 281 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 381 at Castrogiovanni a year after its fall in 859; see *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 306 and (It.), 1, 425 for the enslaving of the population of Taormina in December 962, its evacuation of Christians and resettlement with Muslims.
- Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, p. 278 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 376 for Ragusa; *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 289 and (It.), 1, 396 for two months of pillaging after the fall of Syracuse, corroborating the account of destruction in the letter of Theodosius and Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 414 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 16. See *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 412 and (It.), 2, 12 for the depopulation and partial dismantling of Cefalù after its fall in 858.
- Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 285 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 389 at Syracuse in 877/8; *ibid.*, (Ar.), 1, 279 and (It.), 1, 378 for the siege of Qaṣr al-Jadīd, which was lifted after prisoners were taken. The release of Muslim prisoners in 844/5 at Taormina, and in 872/3 and later in 896 at Syracuse, shows the success of Byzantine forces. See Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 285 and 290 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 389 and 399; Ibn ‘Idhārī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 416 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 19. See Ibn ‘Idhārī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 411 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 10 for the taking of 6,000 prisoners (only 5,000 were recorded in Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 279 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 378) after the six-month siege of Butera in 853.

- 13 The fullest synthesis of the Aghlabid campaigns is probably still Talbi 1966, 403–536.
- 14 There is now a large corpus of studies on Byzantine *kastra*; *inter alia*, Cracco Ruggini 1980, 3, 3–97; Maurici 1992, 13–47; Pesez 1994, 379–85; Molinari 2002, 323–53; Vassallo 2009, 679–98; Uggeri 2010, 189–205; Molinari 2013, 97–114.
- 15 Vaccaro 2013, 34–69.
- 16 For bibliography and context with the rest of the island, see De Simone 1997, 55–87.
- 17 Bagnera 2013, 61–88; Arcifa and Bagnera 2014, 165–90.
- 18 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 118–31. Also De Simone 1999, 77–131, including a translation of Ibn Ḥawqal, 115–27.
- 19 Rapoport and Savage-Smith 2014, 136–43 and 457–66 (A fols 32b–33a). On the question of centre and periphery in the Islamic period, see Metcalfe 2017a, 127–67.
- 20 See Bresc 1985, 241–58, at 244; cf. Molinari 1995, 361–77.
- 21 *wa-waṣal kitāb al-Muʿizz ilā l-amūr Aḥmad yuʿarrifuhu bi-l-sulḥ wa-yaʾmuruhu bi-bināʾ aswār al-madīna wa-tahṣīnahā wa-yuʾlimuhu anna al-bināʾ al-yawm khayr min ghadd wa-an yabnī fī kull iqlīm min aqālīm al-jazīra madīna ḥaṣīna wa-jāmīʿan wa-minbaran wa-an yaʾkhudh ahl kull iqlīm bi-suknā madīnatihim wa-lā yutarikū mutaḥarrāqīn fī l-qurāʾ. Fa-sānaʾ al-amūr Aḥmad ilā dālik wa-sharaʾ fī bināʾ aswār al-madīna wa-baʾath ilā jamīʿ al-jazīra mashāyikh li-yaqifū ʾalā l-ʾamāra. Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arīb*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 494–5 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 134–5. The phrase *aswār al-madīna* (literally, ‘the walls of the city’) is ambiguous, but here it seems to refer to Palermo itself.*
- 22 Molinari 2010, 229–45.
- 23 Bresc 1985, 594–604. Reprinted in Bresc 1990. On the limits and possibilities of the evidence, see Molinari 2012b, 221–40; Molinari 2012a, 345–60.
- 24 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 94; Halm 1996, 355–65; more generally, see Amara 2010, 53–65.
- 25 See Jawdhar’s *Life*, in Haji 2012, 142–5 (English) and 150–1 (Arabic).
- 26 Haji 2012, nos 49, 52 and 56, 126–7, 129–30 and 132, and Arabic 129–30, 134 and 137. See also the *amīr* Yūsuf’s apparent monopoly on pack animals, al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 497 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 140. In both cases (stock-breeding and timber-logging), there are links to the provision of hardware for the army and navy.
- 27 Al-Dāwudī 1962, 2, 416 (Arabic) and 436 (French).
- 28 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 126–7.
- 29 In 937 the Fatimid *ʾāmil* (named as Ibn Abī Ḥamrān by al-Nuwayrī) was thrown out of Agrigento by its inhabitants. Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arīb*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 491 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 129.
- 30 Al-Dāwudī 1962, 416 and 436. The Banū ʾAbd al-Ṣamad had been campaigning with Ibrāhīm II in August of that year.
- 31 On Ibn al-Ṭiflī, see Mandalà 2014a, 151–86, at 157–61, and also for the hypothesis that al-Ṭiflī was to be identified with al-Ṭāwulī, a leader of a pro-Ifrīqiya faction, whose murder sparked a serious insurrection during 888–9.
- 32 ʾAbbās 1994, 211–20; Cassarino 2015, 123–38.
- 33 See Chiarelli 2011, 151–5 with references.
- 34 On the sale of Raḥl Karrām, see Bresc 1995, 69–97.
- 35 For the estates of Raḥl al-Māya and Raḥl Ibn Baraka, and members of the Banū Baraka (Ḥusayn, Fityān, ʾUthmān and Khilfa bin Baraka) and Banū l-Māya (Ḥasan and Yaḥyā bin al-Māya), see Cusa 1982, 208–9, 216, 249–50 and 278.
- 36 From the Arabic–Latin description of Monreale’s boundaries in western Sicily, the following illustrative sample relates to springs, wells, ponds, ditches, crossings and rivers: ʾayn ʾAbd al-Kāfī, *bīr* Ibn ʾAtīq, *ghadīr* al-Zughundī, *khandaq* Ibn Ḥawwās, *madīq* Ibn Rizq Allāh, and *wādī* Bū Khabīth. See Cusa 1982, 202–44 (Arabic).
- 37 On this, see Metcalfe 2017a, 127–67. For a redacted Italian version, see Metcalfe 2017b, 529–78.
- 38 The fullest extant records are for Aci, Catania, Cefalù, Calatrasi and Corleone, but none predates the 1090s. The most complete record relates to Calatrasi where we have boundary descriptions to accompany ‘villein’ lists comprising 444 taxable households. The records for Corleone also name household heads of surrounding estates and descriptions of many land boundaries, see Cusa 1982, 131–79, 246–85, 473–80, 541–9, 564–95.
- 39 A legal case from 1123 involved the Muslim lord of Peterrana about whom evidence was gathered from a ‘council’ (*gerousia*) at Ciminna, which had a mixed-faith population at that time. Here, the ‘council’ is reminiscent of the *shūrā* and *jamāʿa*, both attested in Muslim Palermo as a decision-making or consultative body. See Cusa 1982, 471–2 for the petition of Abū Muḍar Ibn al-Bithirrānī at Ciminna. For comment, see Johns 2002, 73–4.
- 40 For examples of a notary, local administrator, market official, legist, muezzin, magistrate, castellan and market supervisor (*al-kātib* ʾAbd Allāh, *al-wakīl* Yūsuf, ʾAlī *mutaqabbil* al-*sūq*, ʾUmar al-*faqīh*, Aḥmad al-*muʾadhdhin*, Ḥusayn al-*qāḍī*, Ḥasan al-*qastallānī*, *ṣāḥib* al-*sūq*), see Cusa 1982, 160, 247, 262, 268, 285, 476, 574 and 577.
- 41 For *al-qāʾid* Makhlūf and Aḥmad *shaykh* al-*qarya* (among many examples), see Cusa 1982, 155 and 268.
- 42 For example, from Corleone: Abū Bakr al-Dalīl, whose sons were Yūsuf b. al-Dalīl and Mann Allāh b. al-Dalīl, whose sons were Jaʿfar b. Mann Allāh, Abū ʾAbd Allāh b. Mann Allāh and ʾImrān b. Mann Allāh. See Cusa 1982 138, 143, 139, 141, 142 and 136 respectively.
- 43 Al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 496 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 139. The protesting parties appear to have been from western Sicily since they were close enough to Palermo to have been able to march in force on it.
- 44 Amari 1933–9, 2, 49–61, at 54.
- 45 For recent work on Berber settlement and toponymy in Sicily, see Chiarelli 2011, 144–54, *pace* Nef: ‘pour ce qui concerne la Sicile, les Berbères sont quasiment absents des sources’, see Nef 2011b, 103–16, at 106. Also Nef 2008a, 57–72 and Nef 2010, 45–58; also, Metcalfe 2009, 36–40.
- 46 Illustrative examples include the gate and quarter of Ibn Qarhab in Palermo; and the fort of Qalʾat Abī Thawr, which probably became modern Caltavuturo. For a survey, particularly of defensive sites, see Maurici 1992, 62–72.
- 47 Al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 488 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 123. Cf. earlier accounts of Ibn ʾIdhārī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 414 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 14; and Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 284 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 388, neither of whom mention that the assassin was Berber.
- 48 Al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 496 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 137–8.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 This was at least the claim of the compiler of *The Cambridge Chronicle* (*Taʾrīkh jazīrat Ṣiqillīya*), see *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 190 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 277.
- 51 See Walker 2008, 45–56, and Lev 1987, 337–65. See also Jawdhar, *Inside the Immaculate Portal*, for a dispute over of a plot of land (*rabīʿ*) in Ifrīqiya said to have been bought or usurped by one of the Kutāma: Haji 2012, no. 57, 132–3, (Arabic), 138–9. In Ifrīqiya *rijāl* (‘villeins’) attached to the Kutāma were holders of fiefs (*iqṭāʿ*). See *ibid.*, no. 2, 24 and 7 (Arabic). In Sicily the picture is less clear: three families of Kutāma were registered on Norman lists as minor

- landholders around Corleone; the toponym Cutema may also be connected to the Kutāma. See Amari 1933–9, 2, 53–5.
- 52 Chiarelli 2015, 129–41.
- 53 Chiarelli 2011, 148–50.
- 54 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 134.
- 55 Ben Hamadi 2004, 169–90.
- 56 Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 305–6, 310 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 424–6, 432.
- 57 Al-Dāwudī 1962, 420 (Arabic) and 438 (French).
- 58 Cusa 1982, 541–8 and 564–94.
- 59 Given the familiarity of Ibn al-Qaṭṭāʿ with literati around the ‘court’ of Ibn Mankūd, the *ṭāʾifa* ruler of Mazara, it is possible that his history may have been commissioned by him. On the literary outputs of Ibn al-Qaṭṭāʿ, see also Rizzitano 1954.
- 60 Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Qarqūdī, see ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, *Kharīdat al-qasr*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 719 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 457. The Banū Qarqūd was a subdivision of the Hawwāra, see Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-Ibar*, 11, 283; French trans. in Slane and Casanova, 1, 274. See also the Sicilian town of Qarqūdhi, between Agrigento and Naro; al-Idrīsī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 59 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 99.
- 61 ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 721 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 460–1. For the palace or fort (*qasr*) of Ibn Mankūd, see al-Idrīsī 1880–9, 2, 609.
- 62 ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 717 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 453. It is not clear what *ḥājib* might have meant in late Kalbid Sicily, but evidently Badīr was high-ranking in the late Kalbid period, quite possibly with a military role. For *ḥādīb*, see Sourdell, Bosworth and Lambton 1991, 3, 45–9. It is also plausible that either he or his son was killed by Ibn al-Thumna shortly prior to the Norman Conquest.
- 63 Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-Ẓunūn*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 857 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 650. The Ghumāra were a subdivision of the Masmūda Berbers.
- 64 Aquilina 1987, 1, vii–xlili, including an extensive bibliography for the wider language question.
- 65 Ibn Ḥamdis, who had a keen sense of traditional Arab–Berber difference, poetically remarked: ‘I have taken Paradise (*tajanna*) as my homeland / having abandoned Sicily as my homeland’. Ibn Ḥamdis, *Dīwān*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 683 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 404. By contrasting his new home in Ifrīqiya with the heaven that was pre-Norman Sicily (imagery on which he drew frequently – *tajanna* is the Berber form of the Arabic *janna* ‘heaven’), he implies that Berber was more widely spoken in Ifrīqiya than in Sicily.
- 66 Although there are many Berber tribal, and even supratribal, names among literati, witnesses, signatories and those listed on the Norman *jarāʿid*, it was extremely rare to find anyone in Sicily with a Berber first name (*ism*), such as Bādīs, Iydīr or Izam, which were otherwise popular among Maghribi Berbers. Among immigrant Berber settlers conceded to the church at Triocalà in 1141, we find the Berber nickname al-F.rṭās, ‘the mangy’. See Johns and Von Falkenhausen 2016, 1–84. As the authors suggest, this is sufficient to imply that Berber dialects were understood in those communities. For *furṭās/firṭās/farṭās*, see Corriente 1997, 395; ‘teigneux’ in Dozy 1877, 2, 256. In terms of toponymy, the only possible example of Berber vocabulary of which I am aware is the famous Grotta dell’Uzzo that may be derived from *wazzu* referring to a forsythia shrub.
- 67 Pellegrini 1972, 1, 250–332, esp. 250–83.
- 68 For the Ḥammūdids and further references, see Johns 2002, 234–42.
- 69 Quoted in ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 703 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 429, and Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Ṣila fī taʾrīkh al-Andalus*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 700 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 425 and 426.
- 70 In Greek sources there are only occasional references to ‘Sicilians’ and these tend to be found on the mainland and more common in diasporic communities. For their part, in the Latin narrative sources for the Norman Conquest, most of whom had a keen sense of regional difference, references to ‘Sicilians’ (which could refer to Muslims and Christians alike) are frequent. On this, see Metcalfe 2003, 55–8. See also Hysell 2012, 139–56.
- 71 *taththawabū al-Ṣiqillīyūn ‘alā ahl Ifrīqiya*, see *The Cambridge Chronicle*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 193 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 280. The Arabic sources themselves are tellingly inconsistent. If we credit later Arab-Muslim sources, then the Ibn Qarhab revolt of 915–16, in which Berbers rose up to follow an Arab commander, suggests there was no coherent ethno-political alignment. See Nef 2011b, 103–15 (108–9), and Mandalà 2012, 343–74.
- 72 Mandalà 2014a, 151–86.
- 73 Ibn al-Thumna was married to the sister of Ibn al-Ḥawwās; she had previously been married to Ibn al-Maklātī. See al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 446 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 142.
- 74 Malaterra 1927–8, 2.29, 41.
- 75 The most serious ‘revolt’ was that of Benervert around Syracuse, which was, in effect, a continuation of the conquest since he had probably never accepted peace. *Ibid.*, 4.10–12, 91–2.
- 76 For example, at Gerace, the ‘Rough Men’ (*rustici*) of the town, all of whom were said to be armed, threatened Guiscard fearing his plans were a way of imposing authority over them, see the anonymous *Historia Sicula*: Muratori 1726, 8, col. 758. For the brief, local uprisings at Pantalica and Iato, see Malaterra 1927–8, 4.18, 97–8 and 3.20, 69; at Castronuovo, the Normans intervened on behalf of a miller who had fallen out with his former lord, *ibid.*, 3.12, 64.
- 77 Al-Ḥimyarī, 1975, 520. For discussion and analysis, see Brincat 1995.
- 78 See al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 2, 497 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 2, 140–1.
- 79 *Ibid.*, ‘They [people of Sicily] replied, “How is that so when we have been intermarried with them [the people of Ifrīqiya], mingled with them to become one and the same thing?”’ (*qad ṣāharnāhum wa-ikhtalaṭnā bihim wa-ṣarnā shayan wāhidan*).
- 80 For the category divisions of ‘Rough Men’ and ‘Smooth Men’ in the Norman period, see Johns 2002, 145–51. For a different perspective, see Nef 2000a, 579–607, and Nef 2011a, 492–507. Of those registered as ‘Smooth Men’, many bore names to suggest they were engaged in a craft or trade and probably had no connection with the land – and thus no need to pay a tax on land or its produce. The ‘Smooth Men’ may therefore have been exempt from the *kharāj*, such as newcomers, craftsmen and those who had gone to settle (voluntarily or otherwise) on previously unworked land.
- 81 For the Sicilian Christians, see Amari 1933–9, 1, 606–63; for a historiographical perspective, see Metcalfe 2009, pp. 32–40.
- 82 As the early 13th-century geographer Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī reported: ‘Sicily remained in the hands of the Muslims for a [long] time and most of its people became Muslim’ (*wa-ṣāra akthar ahlihi muslimīn*), see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 124 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 202–3. Yāqūt can be shown to have had access to (now lost) late Kalbid histories of Sicily; see Metcalfe 2019. For al-Iṣṭakhrī’s claim that Sicily’s population, like Crete’s, consisted of Muslim frontier raiders (*ahl ghazw*), see *Kitāb al-Aqāʾim*, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 10 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 6–7.

- 83 Metcalfe 2013, 68–98 (72), where the arguments presented here were rehearsed. For discussion of the term *meshumad* (משומד, ‘destroyed one’), see Mandalà 2014b, 107–8; Zeitlin 1963, 84–6.
- 84 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 129.
- 85 In riots of 1162, Muslims were said to be indistinguishable from Christians as they fled. In 1184 Ibn Jubayr famously described the Arabic-speaking Christian women of Palermo in their fine clothes and accessories, which were also worn by Muslims. For an intriguing mid-1100s reference to Christian men in Palermo distinguished by wearing a cross and sash (*wishāh*), see ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 2, 724–5 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 2, 467.
- 86 Nef 2008b, 255–86. Mandalà 2014b, 95–124.
- 87 On the development of *mawālī* during the early centuries of Islam, see the collection of essays in Bernards and Nawas 2005; more generally, Wensink and Crone 1991, 6, 874–82.
- 88 For important contemporary insights into the roles and influence of patronage, gift-giving and clientage among the Fatimid ruling classes, see the biography and documents of Jawdhār in Haji 2012.
- 89 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 124. In this case, it is again worth noting that Ibn Ḥawqal’s remarks were made shortly after the event, thus recalling recent memories.
- 90 For the important example of a Christian *mawālā* in Kalbid Sicily, see Mandalà 2016, 72–118.
- 91 On Bari, see al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 1, 183–4 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 2, 268–70; Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 1, 285–6 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 1, 390–1; Musca 1967, and also the important contribution of Di Branco 2011, 5–13.
- 92 Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 1, pp. 308–9; *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 1, p. 429.
- 93 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 130. For lists of the *aribbā*’ on Norman registers of men, see Johns 2002, 159–65.
- 94 The category distinction of *rabīb*, as found on Norman population lists (*jarā’id al-rijāl*), shows a degree of institutionalisation most likely informed by fiscal concerns to differentiate between families as taxable units. It may also reflect the moral and legal concerns of jurists that marital relations with stepchildren, although not strictly consanguineous, were still considered unlawful (*muḥrim*). For the *rabīb*s of Corleone, who represented about 3% of the registered population, see Cusa 1982, 162, and Johns 2002, 159–61. For the Cairo Geniza evidence, see Goitein 1967, 3, 311.
- 95 Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 130.
- 96 ‘foedus inerat, eorumque more per aurem adoptivum fratrem’, see Malaterra 1927–8, 2.46, 54. The meaning of *per aurem* as ‘aurally’ or ‘through the ear’, rather than ‘by the ear’, is confirmed by the well-known claim of St Ambrose that ‘Maria per aurem impregnata est’.
- 97 For the wider context of brother-making and the particular prevalence of prayers for *adelphopoiesis* in medieval south Italy, see Rapp 2015.
- 98 ‘iuxta consuetudinem Siculorum, fraterne fedus societatis contraxerint seseque invicem iureiurando astrinxerint ut alter alterum modis omnibus promoveret.’ Siragusa 1904, 10. In Simon of Lentini’s mid-1300s’ version of Malaterra, this episode had become a custom of the Saracens. However, the author claimed that the practice was a local one of saintly brotherhood: ‘vulendu pluy leiamenti ingannari a Serloni, prisi cum ipsu grandi amistati, et parlaru a fidanza insembla et fichirusi frati adottivi, zo è frati di santi, li chamamu nuy. Et kistu fratiscu fu fattu secundu la costumanza di la Sarrachini, la quali era chi si prendianu per l’auricha l’unu a l’altru.’ Rossi-Taibbi 1954, 76.
- 99 ‘τὸ δὲ ἔμῳδ πνευματικῷ πατρὸς καὶ ἀναδόχου μεγάλου ποτὲ κώμιτος Σικελίας καὶ Καλαβρίας κυρῶ Ῥογερίου’, see Cusa 1982, 16–19.
- 100 ‘Most people from their strongholds, the countryside and estates are of the opinion that marriage to Christians is on condition that their male child follows his father in being a convert (*musha’midh*), and that a female child becomes Christian like her mother.’ Ibn Ḥawqal 1938, 129. This passage is omitted in both versions of *BAS<sup>s</sup>*. The same report to the effect that, ‘some of them intermarry with their neighbours among the Byzantines of the island on the condition that if they are given a boy child he will retain the religion of his father, and if a girl, the religion of her mother’ appeared in the text of the 11th-century *The Book of Curiosities*, the Sicilian section of which was clearly based on the work of Ibn Ḥawqal. See Rapoport and Savage-Smith 2014, fol. 32a, lines 1–28, 136–45 (Arabic) and 457–66 (English).
- 101 Apart from frequent Muslim incursions from the 800s onwards and the establishment of bases further north on the mainland at Bari, Taranto and on *mons* Garigliano, there was a mosque at Réggio in the early 950s, see Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 1, 303–4 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 1, 421; Metcalfe 2009, 53–4. For 60 ‘slavi’, presumably *Ṣaqāliba* troops, from the Kalbid army who joined Guiscard in Calabria in 1054, see Malaterra 1927–8, 1.16, 16; Of 39 ‘villeins’ from Nicótera in 1093, five had Arabic elements in their names, see Cusa 1982, 27; a similar proportion are recorded in the mid-1000s from Oppido in Calabria, see Guillou 1974, 29–30. At the start of the Norman Conquest, the Muslims of Réggio were said to have been keen to impress Guiscard with their loyalty, see Amatus 1935, 5.11, 137.
- 102 In Laourdas and Westerink 1983–8, ep. 297, 3, 162–6. For context and analysis, see Martin 1998, 2, 481–91.
- 103 Quoted by ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 2, 710–11 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 2, 442.
- 104 Jeffrey 1998, xviii–xix.
- 105 Borsari 1953, 135–51.
- 106 Ibid., at §1, 137: ‘ἢ μὲν μήτηρ διέτρεφεν αὐτὸ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νοθεσίᾳ κυρίου· ὁ δὲ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς εἴθιζεν αὐτὸ πρὸς τὰ αὐτοῦ βαρβαρικὰ ἔθνη.’
- 107 An unusual point of Ismā’īlī inheritance law allowed the offspring of converts to inherit in the case of mixed-faith families. See Cilardo 2011, 62 and 119–22.
- 108 See, for example, the mediation of monks in a truce from the year 953/4 in *The Cambridge Chronicle*, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 1, 201 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 1, 291; the famous petition of St Nilus to the *amīr*’s secretary for the release of captured monks. Migne 1840, col. 70, cxx.121.
- 109 For monograph studies on the language situation, see Várvaro 1981; Caracausi 1996; Agius 1996; Metcalfe 2003.
- 110 On the Latin-speaking Africans, see Lewicki 1951–2, 415–80; Camps 1985, 194–5.
- 111 For Dioscurides, see Ibn Abī ‘Uṣaybī’a, ‘*Uyūn al-anbā*’, in *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (Ar.), 2, 750–1 and *BAS<sup>s</sup>* (It.), 2, 505–6, and also Mandalà 2014b, 102–7. Géhin 1997, 162–75. Signs of Arabic–Greek bilingualism are numerous in Norman charter materials, and direct evidence can also be found in an (undated) inventory of medicinal drugs whose Arabic names were written out in Greek letters. See Zipser 2003/4, 154–66.
- 112 Amatus 1935, 5.24, 244 and Malaterra 1927–8, 4.2, 86.
- 113 Leaving aside the written forms of Italo-Greek dialects such as Calabrian Bovesè, Griko or Katoitaliótika of the Salento Peninsula, for an example of early modern Italo-Greek transcription, see Ménager 1957, 336–7; for Sicilian Greek

- transcribed into Latin letters c. 1100, see Garufi 1928, 1–100.
- 114 Blasco Ferrer 2003, 1, 51–62; Soddu, Crasta and Strinna 2010, 1–42.
- 115 For a recent overview of the Palermitan Jews, see Mandalà 2013, 437–88. More generally, and with extensive references, Gil 2004, esp. 535–85.
- 116 Simonsohn 1997.
- 117 See Gil 1997, 96–172, esp. 125–30; Johns 2006, 343–62, at 342–3; Metcalfe 2009, 97–8 and 106–8.
- 118 Benjamin of Tudela 1907, 78. For a Judeo-Arabic petition from 1187, see Cusa 1982, 495–6; translation in Simonsohn 1997, 425–6. On the Judeo-Arabic ‘Grizandus’ inscription, see Krönig 1989, 273–89, and Mandalà, G., ‘Stèle funéraire quadrilingue d’Anne, mère du clerc Grisanthe. Stèle funéraire chrétienne avec inscription quadrilingue (judéo-arabe, latin, grec et arabe, a. 1149)’, [www.qantara-med.org](http://www.qantara-med.org) (accessed 4 January 2016).
- 119 See Minervini 2014, 1139–54, n. 34, at 1149–50, that corrects the views of Rocco 1995, 335–69; Bresc 2001; Nef 2000b, 85–97.
- 120 See, for example, the names of 25 Jews granted to the church at Catania in 1095, Cusa 1982, 583–4. On issues of legal status and toleration, see Houben 2002, 313–39, esp. 333–7.
- 121 For an overview and references, see Metcalfe 2009, 70–87.
- 122 The deliberate construction of Norman palace art through reimportation from the Islamic world is the argument proposed by Johns 1995, 9–50.
- 123 Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (Ar.), 1, 319 and *BAS*<sup>2</sup> (It.), 1, 448. Some can be later found in the Iberian Peninsula, Egypt and North Africa, recognisable by locative elements in their personal names.
- 124 Johns 2002, 31–63.
- 125 In the 1100s a certain Ibn al-Qissīs Abū Ghālib was abbot of an unidentified monastery near Collesano, see Cusa 1982, 505–6. Among the monks of Patti who negotiated terms of tenure with the villagers of Librizzi in 1117 was a certain Philip ‘the Arab’, see Cusa 1982, 512–13. During the turmoil of the 1200s, Muslims were said to have become monks in the church of Cefalù, see Mirto 1972, 39–41.
- 126 Takayama 1993, 25–56; Johns 2002, 63–90.
- 127 See Von Falkenhausen 1985, 49–51; Johns 2002, 69–74.
- 128 For an image of the charter, see *Letà normanna e sveva in Sicilia. Mostra storico-documentaria e bibliografica* (no author) 1994, 34–5. For the text, see Cusa 1982, 58, where it is misdated to 1079.
- 129 On Christodoulos, see al-Maqrīzī’s biography of George of Antioch with translation and discussion in Johns 2002, 80–90.
- 130 For examples of conversion from Islam in the Norman period, see Metcalfe 2003, 33–54.
- 131 For references and historiography relating to the Sicilian Hammudids, see Johns 2002, 234–42.
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# Chapter 13

## Sicily in Transition: Public Trends and Private Lives through Four Regimes

Martin Carver  
University of York

Girolamo Fiorentino  
University of Salento in Lecce

Alessandra Molinari  
University of Rome Tor Vergata

### Background

‘Sicily in transition’, also known by its classically redolent acronym *sictransit*, is an archaeological research project designed to assess the impact of successive changes of regime on the lives of Sicilians. The period of interest is the 6th to the 13th centuries, and the regimes in question are those of the Justinian Byzantines, the Sunni Aghlabids, the Shi’ite Kalbids, the Normans of Roger II and the Swabians of Henry VI and Frederick II. These regimes, very different in circumstance, intention and outcome, have been well explored through documentary, place name and numismatic evidence as exemplified and illuminated by a number of contributions in this book.

These centuries have also been investigated by archaeologists, using settlement patterns, burial rites, urban evolution and excavations driven by research, rescue or the need to present an outstanding legacy of monuments.<sup>1</sup> The settlement sequence emerging from this activity has been coming into focus over the past few decades.<sup>2</sup> In the 5th to 8th centuries, the evidence for the occupation of the Roman *villae* after the 6th century is sparse, and the main points of reference in the rural landscapes are large sprawling agricultural and industrial centres known as ‘agri-towns’.<sup>3</sup> Surface survey suggests that these had contracted by the mid-8th century, but their occupation often continued in some guise into the Islamic and Norman periods.<sup>4</sup> The period from the start of the Islamic conquest in 827 AD is represented by a proliferation of small sites, but without the defended hilltop sites that characterise al-Andalus. With the more stable and prosperous regime of the Kalbid dynasty in the mid-10th century, permanently inhabited sites on hilltops join the expanding villages on the plain. From the 12th century, the hilltop villages were superseded by the more commanding formula of the Norman castle and church. Lowland settlement continued to be widespread and productive into the 12th century; by the 13th century under the Swabians there was a notable reduction of open villages in the farmland.<sup>5</sup>

In her study ‘What kind of archaeology?’ Alessandra Molinari called for further intensive study of the landscape, using surface survey, systematic excavation and paleobotany in pursuit of agricultural development, settlement dynamics and a greater understanding of social and economic systems.<sup>6</sup> This agenda led (in collaboration with Martin Carver and Girolamo Fiorentino) to the creation of the *sictransit* initiative.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this paper is to present the objectives of the project, aspects of its enlarged programme, its first results and anticipated contribution to the history of early medieval Sicily.

### Premise

Being an archaeological project, *sictransit* is focused on cultural changes and their socio-economic effects, and given the nature of the discipline it tends to be most revealing in observing changes in those everyday activities that leave material traces: erecting buildings,

managing water, growing crops, tending animals, selecting, making and distributing commodities, and burying the dead. The amount of information that can be extracted from such findings has increased hugely over the last 20 years due to advances in scientific methods, which report on the intimate nature of people and identify otherwise invisible commodities. These methods continue to develop new applications and ingenious approaches at a breathless pace.<sup>8</sup> The rationale of *sictransit* is therefore to combine archaeology not only with bioarchaeology, but also with biomolecular archaeology in order to go beneath the radar of documentary history, with its focus on governors and conquerors, and rediscover the lives of farmers, artisans, merchants and their families. Achieving such a combination is part of the long struggle to integrate archaeology with history, but the sciences have epistemological problems of their own: problems of scale, relevance and generalisation, as we shall see. While presenting the general objectives of *sictransit*, this paper focuses on the independent narrative to be drawn from scientific investigations, especially as applied to pottery and the remains of humans, animals and plants. It will hopefully be seen that the triad of archaeology, bioarchaeology and biomolecular archaeology has some potential to open up the agenda, the discourse and ultimately the overall interpretation of individual, social and economic life in early medieval Sicily.<sup>9</sup>

### Design and methods

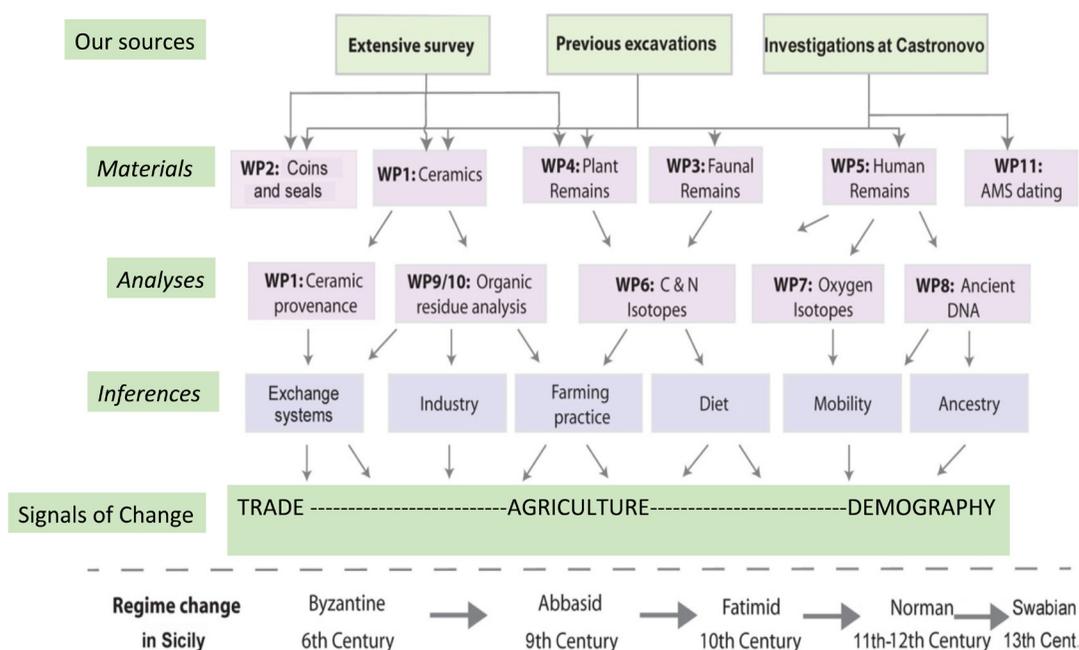
The design of the project was essentially a chain of reasoning that led from the archaeological sources to the definition of selected packets of data and thence to their analysis, and so to a range of inferences that report the effects of changing regimes; or, in other words, to move through the material theatre provided by landscape, settlement and pottery – the tools of fieldwork – into the private lives of people as rediscovered in the laboratory. From there the task is to assemble all the parameters and put them at the service of

themes that are known to be pivotal: in this case summarised under the general topics of agriculture, trade and demography (**Fig. 1**).

The sources are provided by the rich assemblages in the storerooms that are the legacy of previous excavations conducted under the auspices of the Soprintendenze, together with formal surveys intended to write the settlement history of selected landscapes. Important excavations have been carried out in most of the major towns, those inside Palermo, Mazara and Catania being especially valuable for our period, while notable rural surveys, embracing the sequence from Byzantine to Swabian, have been applied in the territories of Entella, Sofiana, Segesta, Monte Iato and Agrigento.<sup>10</sup> In order to strengthen the interpretations that can be drawn from these diverse sources it was felt important to include a high-intensity archaeological investigation of a place where all the periods of study are represented. Such places are rare, especially outside the larger towns, but we have been fortunate in being able to undertake intensive surveys as well as six productive excavations focused on Castronovo di Sicilia, a small town situated roughly in the centre of the island.<sup>14</sup>

The regular yield of all these investigations, apart from the geography of structures, consists of pottery, animal bones, plant remains and human remains. The ubiquity of these materials and their frequent occurrence in dated contexts provide a basis for reviewing the experience of the island as a whole from east to west and north to south. For the creation of an independent archaeological chronology, perhaps no single artefact type in our period has been as potent or influential as pottery, which constitutes its own archaeological vocabulary and has written, and is writing, its own version of history. Although a radiocarbon programme is under way, datable potsherds presently constitute the principal means of chronicling both rural settlement patterns and transitions in towns.<sup>12</sup> Our ‘early Byzantine’ period is represented by amphorae, carrying

Figure 1 *Sictransit*: structure of the argument underpinning the project design



commodities in and out of Sicily from the 6th until at least the mid-9th century (in eastern Sicily). However, the 8th to late 9th centuries, encompassing the first Arab conquest, are archaeologically elusive, but with a growing corpus of ceramic containers. What follows in the mid-10th to 11th centuries is a time of material affluence, expansion and export, with Sicilian amphorae found in locations from North Africa to Provence, and fine wares, emanating largely from Palermo, showing up an internal network of contact, dependence and trade. From the end of Roger II's reign to the mid-13th century, the distribution of pottery from Palermo is diminished in the rural sites.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, by the end of this period handmade cooking pots (in use in rural sites for nearly three centuries) have largely disappeared and amphorae have become vessels for storage rather than for exporting commodities. These four main periods provide a chronological framework by which archaeological investigation has been guided.

The study of Sicilian animal bone has been the subject of a pioneering PhD by Veronica Aniceti since 2015.<sup>14</sup> She has explored assemblages from a wide variety of previous excavations, choosing eight important groups as the spearhead study: four in Palermo, three in western Sicily and one in the east. These have sufficient material for a statistically valid investigation. The results will appear in publications over the next few years; meanwhile, some important trends are anticipated here (see below). The surviving assemblage of plant remains in Sicily is dominated by burnt fragments that have retained their shape, requiring sophisticated methods to produce a sequence of exploited taxa. Ongoing methodological research at Lecce includes the identification of seeds by micromorphometric analysis (geometrically defined shapes). The distinction between close members of the same species (for example the *prunus* family: plums, cherries, peaches, nectarines, apricots, almonds) is achieved by using the anatomical signature surviving in burnt wood from the fruit trees. Following the identification of the large version of the *Vicia faba* bean at Lecce (12th century) and at Colmitella (8/9th centuries), the hunt has intensified for the origin of this pulse and its first appearance in southern Europe. Some early results of this part of the project are reviewed below.<sup>15</sup> Another important procedure applied in pollen analysis compares stable isotope signatures of ancient plants with their modern counterparts, with the aim of establishing whether the rise and fall of species is due to anthropogenic or climatic forces.<sup>16</sup>

As mentioned briefly above, types of pottery provide a powerful signal of change, the amphorae and their contents reflecting on trade, and the cooking pots and their contents reflecting on diet and social eating. Amphorae traffic, mapped by the diagnostic minerals in their fabric, is proving to have been remarkably active between the 6th and 12th centuries.<sup>17</sup> The true commodities, and source of wealth, are what was transported inside them, and the contents in each case are being investigated by ORA (organic residue analysis) using the lipids that survive within the pot walls.<sup>18</sup> The early medieval contents are usually assumed to have been wine and oil, as they had been in the Roman period, but the reading of the decay products is by no means

straightforward and needs validation and enlargement.<sup>19</sup> In the case of cooking pots, meat, dairy products, fish and vegetable products are implied by a range of lipids, and modern research is focused on how to recognise specific taxa. Even so, interpretation is complicated by the mixtures encountered, which most likely result from cooking stews or multiple use.<sup>20</sup> For this reason large samples of sherds from the same context are preferred since they can lead to more reliable equations between what was carried, cooked and consumed, when, in what kind of settlement and in what type of pot.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to their conventional osteology, the human bones and teeth that are recovered from cemeteries are analysed for carbon and nitrogen isotopes, which give an indication of diet, and for oxygen and strontium, which map the mobility of individuals by locating their periodic residence through geological signals (and sources of water) by examining sediments preserved in layers of teeth. Stable isotopes characterise individuals not only in terms of their prevailing diet but also how it has varied since adolescence. A special area of inquiry developed in Islamic archaeology is the comparison of particular dietary signatures between men and women and between burial rites of Islamic and Christian practice that are broadly contemporary.<sup>22</sup>

Ancient DNA, especially that determining the whole genome of buried individuals, is the revolutionary research instrument of the decade, which chronicles mutations and thus ancestry, admixture of origins and consanguinity. To infer origins of populations, earlier archaeogenetic studies mainly used DNA sampled from modern populations, samples that naturally also carry information accrued by the genome later than the period of interest. Ancient DNA, which has become viable and affordable only in the last few years, tracks genetic history up to the subject's date of death.<sup>23</sup> The impact of this 'aDNA revolution' has been extraordinary, showing for example that much of the Neolithic population of northern Europe was replaced by immigrants from the Steppe over a short period around 2500 BC.<sup>24</sup> However, as David Reich emphasises, the aDNA revolution has yet to illuminate the genetic events of the last four thousand years.<sup>25</sup> This period, which includes that being studied in Sicily, is also subject to influences from modern experience, contemporary politics being particularly sensitive to findings relating to immigration.<sup>26</sup>

The staff undertaking the scientific analyses began work in October 2017. Their first task has been to assess the analytical viability of the samples collected through the good offices of many colleagues, before the diagnostic molecules are extracted and then interpreted. Isotopes of carbon, nitrogen and oxygen are extracted from human and animal bones and plants. Ancient DNA is extracted from human bones. Lipids, characteristic of plant, animal and fish residues, are extracted from the walls of potsherds. At present we have a database of 182 human individuals and a much larger number of animal bones and ceramics from which to compile a picture of the changing communities. The same samples will be anchored in time by means of radiocarbon dating. High-precision scientific dating is of the greatest importance if the investigative sciences are to make independent contributions to history.

The synthesis of these results will not be straightforward, in the first place due to the uneven survival of evidence from different periods in different parts of the island (Fig. 2). This distribution is interesting in itself, confirming as it does the most enduring evidence for Byzantine culture in eastern Sicily, and the strongest showing of Islamic culture to the west, where the thriving urban centres created by the 10th-century Kalbid regime are also those that have continued into the present day, to be subject to impromptu examination by rescue excavations. However, the evidence of human burial is presenting us with a different narrative, since the majority of our cemeteries with Islamic burial rites are currently dated to the 12th and 13th centuries, after the fall of the Islamic regime. The uneven sources are not the only challenge to historical generalisation, if this is to be our reward. This question is revisited in the conclusion to this paper.

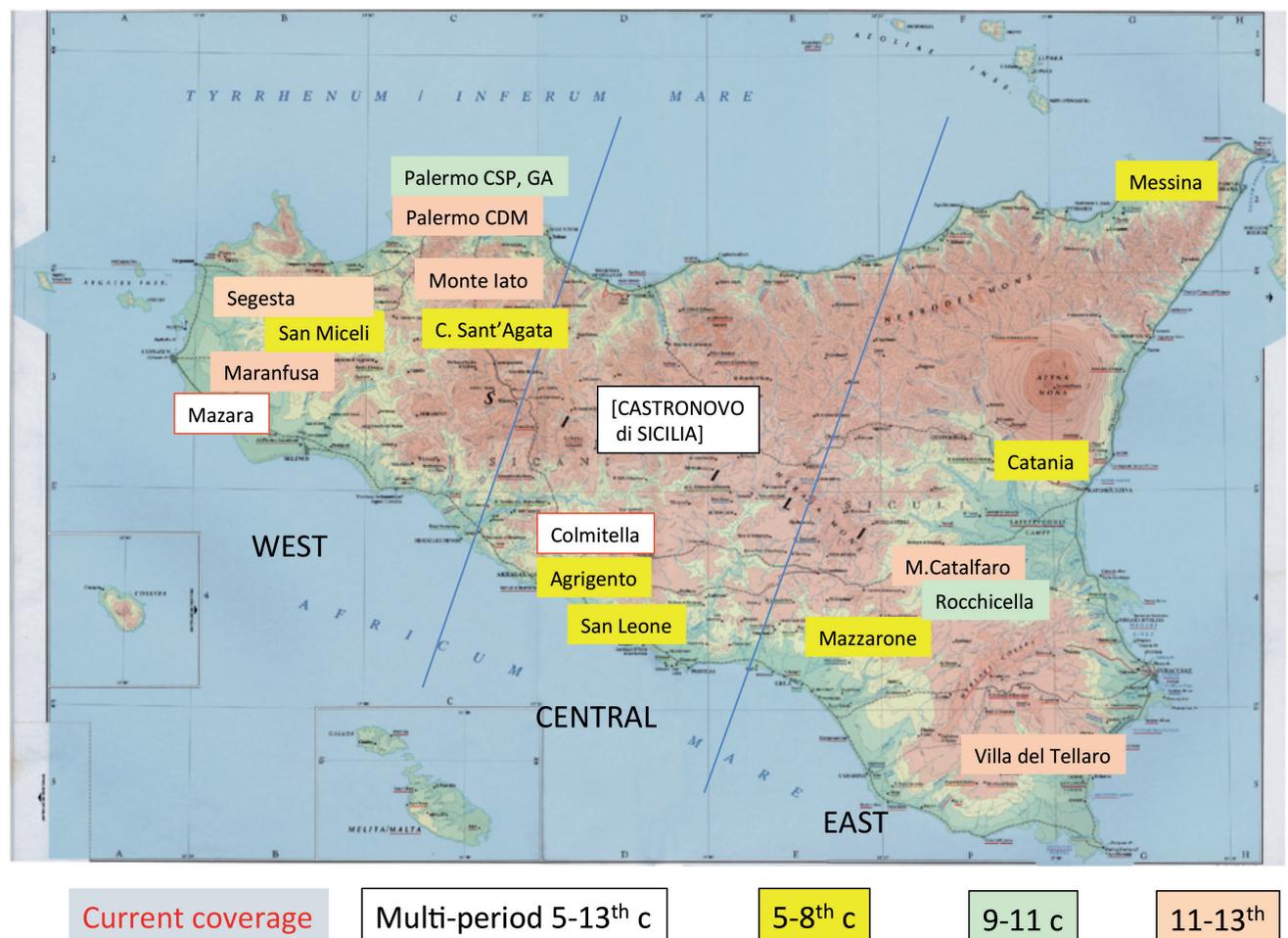
### Some first results

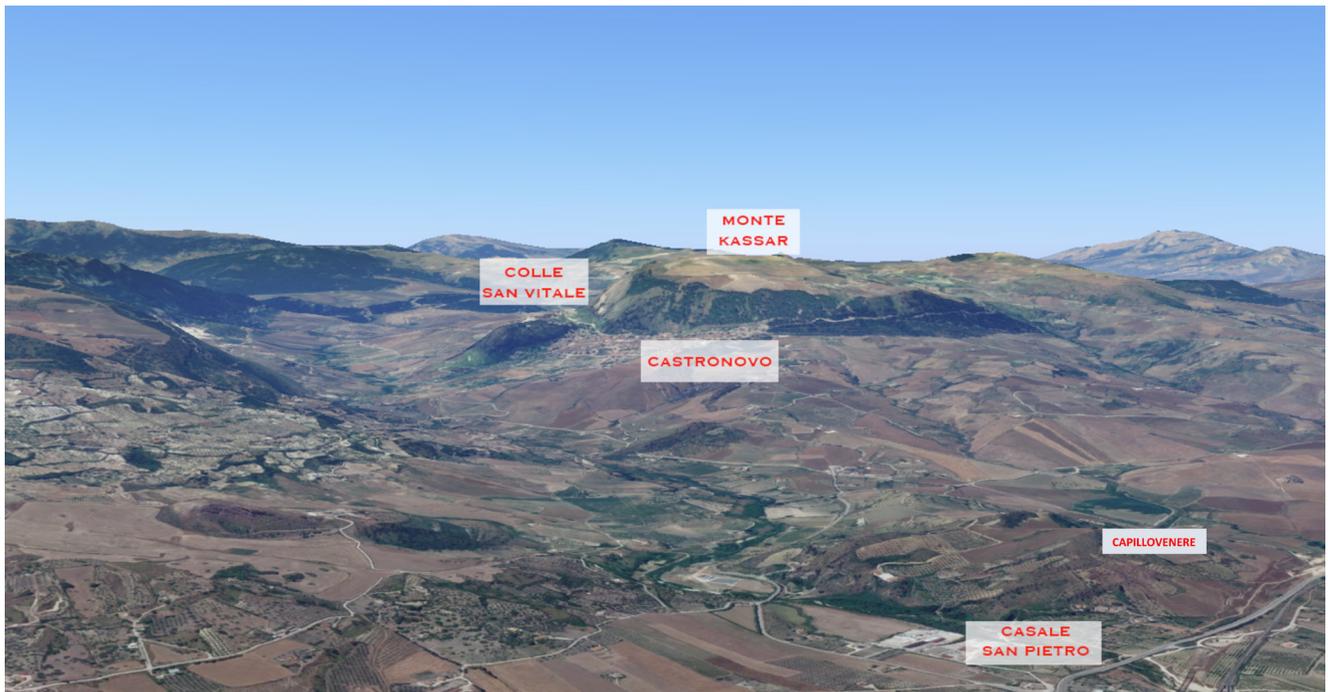
#### The sequence at Castronovo di Sicilia

In order to have a control on the date and context of all the materials collected in previous excavations and surveys, we felt the need for a point of reference, a single site where all periods were represented. Given the relative inaccessibility of long-lived towns, such places are few and far between, but a close approximation to the ideal is provided by the district

of Castronovo di Sicilia, situated halfway along the old road that connected Palermo to Agrigento, on the watershed of the rivers Platani (running south) and Torto (running north). It is an 'ordinary' place, sparsely documented, but has a chance of catching something of the material moods of east and west, and north and south. Five main sites are currently under investigation (Fig. 3). Survey and excavation at Casale San Pietro on the plain in a loop of the river Platani have offered the richest sequence so far. In the 5th to mid-8th centuries it was the site of an 'agro-town' presently known mostly from pottery on the surface.<sup>27</sup> From the mid-9th to 11th centuries it became an Islamic period centre that experienced a Norman and Swabian aftermath. A surviving composite building suspected of including an early Christian church, superseded by a mosque, superseded by a medieval church marks the spot (Fig. 4). The sequence of walls and strata defined in the principal area of excavation was determined by stratigraphy and pottery, and ratified by the techniques of wall building used here in the late Roman period (mortared), Byzantine (with some *opus Africanum*), Arab (rough-hewn stones bonded with clay) and Norman (drystone) (Fig. 5). Finds of amphorae and signet rings reflected the late Roman/early Byzantine lifestyle, and polychrome glazed plates, glass jetons and fine glass marked the Kalbid resurgence of the later 10th century. The long-term location, at least from the 3rd to the 12th centuries, and the reuse of walls suggest a continuing common function,

Figure 2 Sites that have provided archaeological data, colour-coded to the periods represented. Sites in Palermo: CSP = Castello San Pietro; GA = La Gancia; CDM = Corso dei Mille





**Figure 3** Five sites under investigation at Castronovo di Sicilia: Monte Kassar = Byzantine stronghold, 7th–9th centuries; Colle San Vitale = Norman and later castle; Castronovo = town founded in the early Middle Ages; Capillo Venere = rock-cut tombs of the late Roman and early Byzantine; Casale San Pietro = settlement of the 3rd–13th centuries beside the River Plataniat, the mid-point of the route connecting Palermo and Agrigento

perhaps that of serving a way station on the major routeway connecting Palermo and Agrigento.

The local landmark for this routeway is the massive and distinctive profile of Monte Kassar (**Fig. 6**), which was occupied in the Byzantine period and probably during a low point in the sequence noted at Casale San Pietro between the 8th and mid-9th centuries. It is essentially a promontory defended by sheer drops on the east, west and south sides and by a mortared ashlar wall 3m wide and 2km long across the south slope that offers the easiest topographical approach to an enemy (**Fig. 7**). The wandering wall, which follows the lie of the land, was built by four different parties, probably at the same time, and was furnished with 11 towers and at least two gates.<sup>28</sup> At one point when it was examined it had a pair of drystone houses

**Figure 4** Casale San Pietro: the present complex of San Pietro, marking the centre of the Byzantine–Islamic–Norman roadside village



built against the inner face and an assembly area with sets of steps presumably giving access to a parapet (**Fig. 8**). Inside the line of fortification, on a low rise, there was a ruin that has been excavated to reveal a two-phase fortified house with a tower (**Fig. 9**). This building may have acted as a control point with an all-round line of sight to the edge of the promontory. From the summit of Monte Kassar it is possible to see Etna in the north-east and the sea at Termini Imerese in the north and near Agrigento in the south. Although such a major investment must have been the creation of the Byzantine state, it has produced very little evidence of occupation either as surviving buildings or surface debris; in spite of its name there has been no sign to date of the eye-catching pottery of the 10th century. For this reason the fortress is reckoned to have been constructed in the late 7th or 8th century and abandoned at a date compatible with its conquest by the Aghlabid army, which was in the area in the mid-9th century.

On a narrow and precipitous spur attached to Monte Kassar on its south side, the Colle San Vitale, is a set of late medieval monuments (**Fig. 10**). Excavation and the study of building fabric have determined that there was a castle here at least from Norman times.<sup>29</sup> Recent investigations in the old town of Castronovo and the surrounding countryside have begun to map channels for managing water coming down from Monte Kassar that fed the fountains, watered the gardens, drove the mills and irrigated the fields.<sup>30</sup> Insofar as this system resembles similar provisions in al-Andalus, there are grounds for thinking that Castronovo may have begun as a 10th–11th-century foundation.<sup>31</sup> By the late 10th century, at the height of the Kalbid regime, the Christian monk Vitale di Mennita was known to have been active in Castronovo as well as in Calabria where he died in 994. The Castronovo

investigations can thus claim at the present juncture to be opening windows on the rural experience over the span of our period of study.

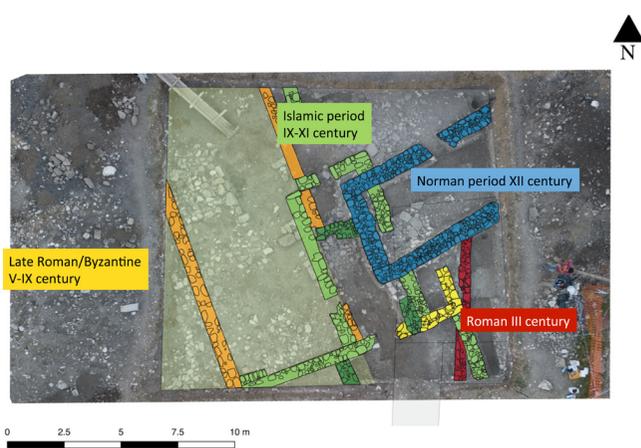
Although we have no accessible cemetery at Castronovo, we do have spot samples from four places: for the early Byzantine period cist burial of two children from a field at Casale San Pietro, and disturbed rock-cut tombs with sparse survival of bones at Capillovenere. A burial in the Muslim rite was noted and retrieved from the inside of the Casale church, and the more robust skeleton of the 13th century from San Vitale. While not representative of particular populations, analysis of the individuals from these keyhole encounters should provide a glimpse of varied human origins and experience over seven centuries in the same rural spot.

### Studies in agriculture and food

As indicated above (**Fig. 1**) we intend to maximise the effect of this concentrated five-year inquiry by applying our energies to three main study areas, namely agriculture (and food), trade and demography, variously served by the analyses in progress. Some trends in the data are offered here on the understanding that they represent only preliminary impressions and the final picture and its interpretation may prove different. To begin with agriculture, we combine the results of faunal remains, plant remains, diet and the contents of pots, all of which reflect the way that successive generations procured food.

In her research in progress Veronica Aniceti has examined animal bone assemblages from eight Sicilian sites at Mazara del Vallo, Casale San Pietro, Colmitella, Rocchicella and in Palermo City (at Castello San Pietro, Sant'Antonino, Corso dei Mille and Palazzo dei Normanni) intended to offer contrasts between town and country, consumer and producer, and Christian and Muslim contexts.<sup>32</sup> There is a varied reaction to the pork abstention expected under Islam, as between town and country: at urban sites in Palermo (Sant'Antonino and Corso dei Mille) sheep are well represented, while pig is virtually absent, and this pattern is repeated at Mazara Del Vallo. Pig is however present in the same period at the rural sites of Colmitella (AG) and Castronovo.<sup>33</sup> In the Norman period by contrast, pig and sheep appear together in urban sites at the Norman Palace in Palermo and at Mazara del Vallo. Metrics also indicate that sheep increase in size between the Byzantine and Arab periods in rural Colmitella and between the Arab and Norman periods at urban Palermo.<sup>34</sup> Such increases are apparently rapid rather than incremental, suggesting a programme of selective breeding. Following the identification of species and the interpretations of assemblages, animal bones are also being analysed by stable isotopes and aDNA: the diet is likely to change in the 10th century with the availability of new crops (for example, crushed sugar cane) used to feed livestock; and the ancestry of sheep is important in the tracking of imported stud animals – a possible reason why their sizes increased in the Arab and Norman periods.

The edible plants available to Sicilians over the study period indicate a significant variation. A reconstruction of the environment by the Lecce team between the 2nd and



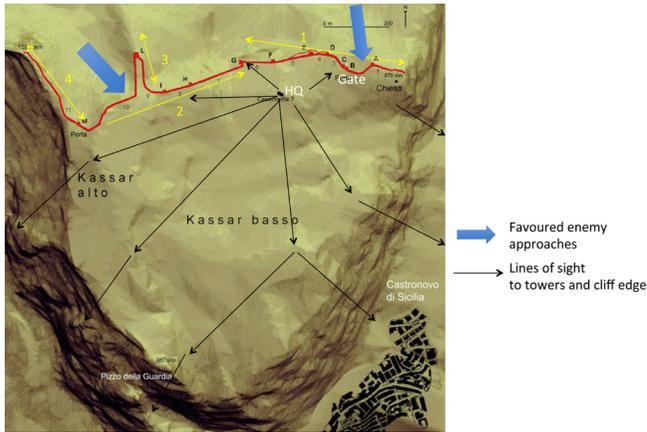
**Figure 5 Casale San Pietro: the stratified sequence (excavations by Antonino Meo and drone photography by Gabriele Ciccone)**

7th centuries at Insula I in Agrigento found that olive trees and vineyards in the 2nd–3rd centuries were followed by an increased presence of trees (shrub oak) and weeds in the 6th–7th centuries. At the Roman temple, refuse that accumulated after the 4th century indicated the cultivation of cereals, pulses and fruit (peach, almond, apricot, plum, olive and grape). At Akrai (in the eastern Sicily) there was a big change between the early and later Roman periods: by the 4th–6th centuries fruit trees, cereals and flax were strongly represented. In spite of this apparent availability of vitamin C, children encountered at Castronovo had suffered from scurvy.<sup>35</sup> This is not a unique result in Byzantine cemeteries: in her study of Crete, Bourbou reported a strong incidence of scurvy (100%) in weaned children. The vitamin C deficiency has been attributed to a reduction of accessible plant foods from 200 species in the pre-Roman period to around 20, including pulses and (desperately) lupins, together with a new emphasis on cereals (which lack vitamin C).<sup>36</sup> The ubiquity of Byzantine grain in Sicily would have provided cheap provender for impoverished humans and animals alike.

Previous research has proposed a major change in the fruit and vegetables available in the Islamic period, thanks to introductions of new plants from the east between the 9th and 11th centuries. As inferred from those taxa that have

**Figure 6 Casale San Pietro: general view of excavations in progress, with (on the skyline) the profile of Monte Kassar**





**Figure 7 Monte Kassar: plan of the Byzantine fortress showing the wall (in red) with the location of the towers (lettered) and building phases (numbered) with hypothetical command structure (HQ) (Base map after Vassallo *et al.* 2015, with permission)**

Arabic names or other documentary indications, the list is considerable: orange, lemon, grapefruit, melon, rice, durum wheat, spinach, aubergine, cotton and sugar.<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately most of these plants and their products are archaeologically elusive and the earlier traces of some of them in the west have provoked challenges to the hypothesis as a whole.<sup>38</sup> Michael Decker is convinced that many of the new agricultural techniques and crops attributed to 9th–10th-century innovations by Islam were already developed in late Byzantine times: he includes irrigation, *qanats*, the *norria* wheel and *saqiya* gearing, and by implication some of the hypothetically new crops, notably rice.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, in current research, Edward Treasure (*pers. comm.*) has found none of the ‘revolution’ crops in Spanish strata well preserved by burning.

But, as these researchers would agree, individual presence and absence of plant remains in particular places is not a decisive argument for or against an industry developing elsewhere. In recent examinations of samples from the excavations at Sicily’s Mazara del Vallo, citrus fruits were found in 10th-century contexts, watermelon, aubergine and cotton in 11th–12th-century contexts, and durum wheat and spinach in the 13th century. These are all plants that have been proposed as Arab introductions into Europe.<sup>40</sup> Archaeological as well as documentary (and some

**Figure 8 Monte Kassar: the mortared defensive wall and the steps within it. Excavation by Fabio Giovannini, 2015**



circumstantial) evidence implies the cultivation of citrus fruits and the production of sugar refined from cane in 10th–11th-century Sicily, particularly in Palermo’s Conca d’Oro.<sup>41</sup> Sugar cane was introduced into the Iberian peninsula in the 11th century, and by the later Middle Ages merchandise books record up to 10 grades of sugar commanding high prices. Dried fruit and fresh fruit are being sent to England, including oranges, lemons, pomegranates and apples, and whole peppercorns were found on the *Mary Rose* (sank 1545).<sup>42</sup> At the least, the 10th–11th century can be seen as an important moment, and Sicily as a pivotal point, for the development of a sophisticated trade in new comestibles, first from east to west and then from south to north.

## Trade

New food is an important commodity, with the potential to enrich producers through trade, and the course of their expanding networks and increased affluence can be most easily tracked archaeologically through pottery, especially amphorae and fine wares. Amphorae provided the main conveyance of wine and olive oil and other liquid products up to the 7th century. But new work has emphasised that Byzantine networks continued to operate, if to new destinations, and were joined and enhanced by the rising Mediterranean economy of the Fatimids.<sup>43</sup> The implication is that amphorae traffic was a robust feature of the Mediterranean until the 13th century.

In the 8th and 9th centuries the east of Sicily between the coast and the Salso basin shares the distribution of the globular amphorae mainly of Aegean origin. In the 10th and 11th centuries there is a wide distribution of amphorae and glazed painted ware with a point of origin at Palermo, reaching internally to more than 30 destinations in the west and south, and overseas to North Africa and across the Tyrrhenian Sea to the west coast of Italy, Sardinia and Provence (**Fig. 11**).<sup>44</sup> It has not been excluded that sugar or fruits conserved by sugar were transported in Palermitan painted amphorae.<sup>45</sup>

Amphorae thus continue to provide a powerful signal of the range of contacts, tributes or markets after the Byzantine period, and according to their distribution connected Sicily with Italy east and west, the south of France, North Africa, Greece and Anatolia.<sup>46</sup> The ORA analysts intend not only to confirm or refute the expected contents of wine and olive oil, but also to find those new commodities that might help to explain the rise in Kalbid profit and prosperity. In this perspective, the end of the Roman Empire is not the end of everything but the start of something new: a busy Mediterranean dominated by Islamic traffic in which Sicily was a major player; the change is not so much one of decline but a change from a command economy to one driven by commercial speculation with an increased number of minor destinations. Added to the fact that the decay products of the new potential wealth-creating commodities were water-soluble, it is consequentially harder to track the new economy on the ground. But painting a vivid picture of the nature and implications of the changes in trade and agriculture from the 6th to the 13th centuries, and the consequent lives of farmers and merchants, seems to be coming within our grasp.

### Demography – cemeteries

Our third study area, demography, is still more challenging. The biological source material consists essentially of human bones and teeth from which it should be possible to determine diet and ancestry; these results are to be drawn from a number of samples, the choice of which is restricted by chemical survival, modern accessibility and the cost of processing. The set of samples is not itself random, but these factors ‘randomise’ the strategy of the original design, which was to explore the overall variation in time and space. In some people’s minds, and no doubt in ours, there is a feeling that some of the techniques should correlate with known historical attributes. We have high hopes of Segesta (Monte Barbaro) and Monte Iato, where nearly contemporary burials of both Islamic and Christian rites have been excavated: stable isotope analysis here should allow a direct correlation between diet and religion.<sup>47</sup>

The sampled population is spread across the island and over nine centuries in an uneven manner.<sup>48</sup> Viable samples of collagen have been extracted from individuals disinterred at 16 cemeteries, using mainly *petrus* bones (in the cranium) for aDNA and long bones or ribs for stable isotopes and radiocarbon dating. At this stage the material is considered sufficiently promising to reveal the nature of selected communities using biomolecular methods. The selection is based on the region and date range of those cemeteries having a minimum number of sampled individuals, set at 10. This allows the characterisation of Byzantine period communities at Agrigento, Contrada Sant’Agata, San Miceli and Catania Sant’Agata la Vetere (60 samples dating between the 5th and 8th centuries), Islamic period communities at Palermo (13 samples; 9th–11th centuries) and communities of the Norman–Swabian period (77 samples; 11th–13th centuries) at Palermo, Segesta, Monte Iato, and



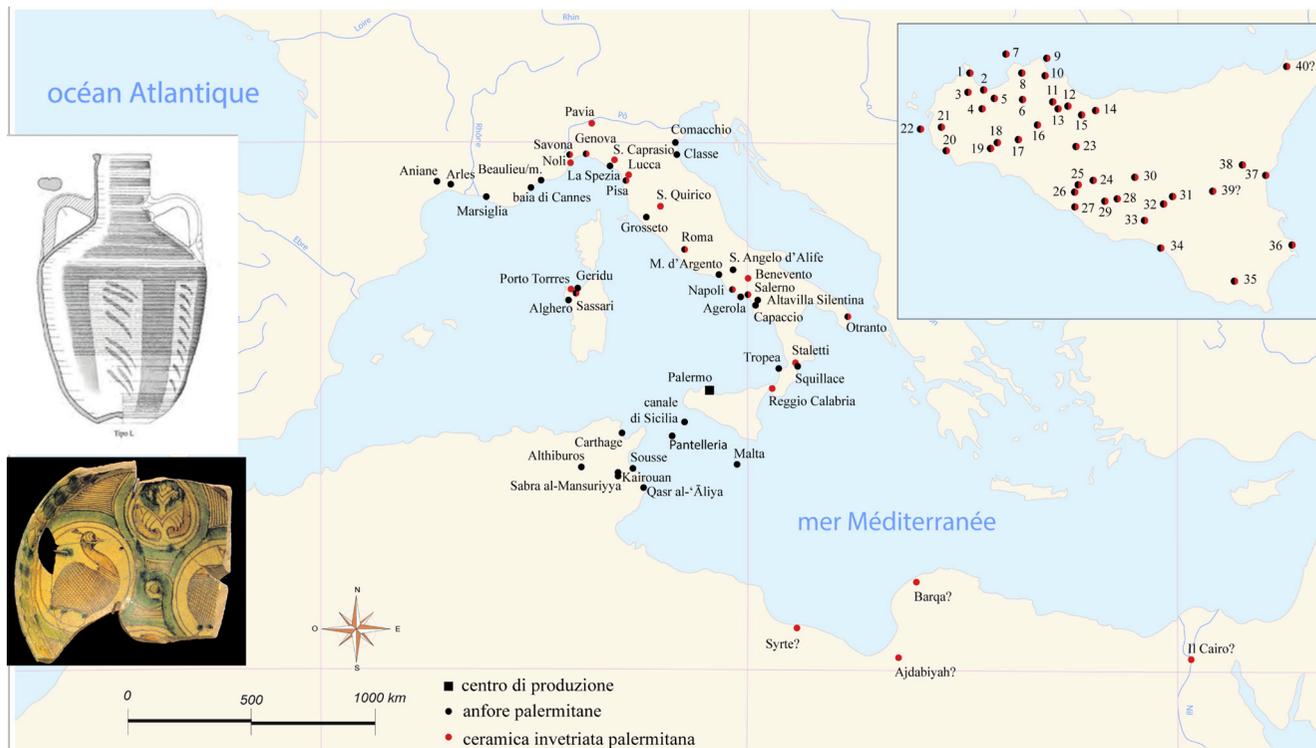
**Figure 9 Monte Kassar: the Byzantine Headquarters Building, 7th–9th centuries. Excavation by Paola Orecchioni and Fabio Giovannini (drone photography by Gabriele Ciccone)**

Villa del Tellaro. These represent town and country, and east, west and centre over the periods.

The radiocarbon-dating programme will be important here because many of the burials of Islamic rite (judged from the position of the body) are in cemeteries currently dated by their excavators to be in the 12th–13th-century range. If this is a fair reflection of belief it means that a considerable number of practising Muslims were still resident in Sicily in the Norman and indeed the Swabian period, not only in the west (Segesta) but also the east (Villa del Tellaro). There is also an indication at Monte Iato and Segesta that Islamic and Christian cemeteries occupying neighbouring areas may have seen some contemporary use. More precise dates will also allow us to show how the different parameters

**Figure 10 The Norman citadel on San Vitale, with the town of Castronovo beyond (drone photography by Gabriele Ciccone)**





**Figure 11** Distribution of Palermo amphorae and ‘pavoncella ware’ (inset) from the second half of the 10th century to the first half of the 11th century. Sicilian sites: (top right) 1. S. Vito lo Capo; 2. Castellammare; 3. M. di Trapani; 4. Calafimi; 5. Alcamo; 6. Jato; 7. Terrasini; 8. Carini; 9. Mondello; 10. Palermo; 11. Marineo; 12. Baucina; 13. Cefala; 14. Brucato; 15. Sambuchi; 16. Corleone; 17. Entella; 18. Montevegato; 19. Castello della Pietra; 20. Mazara; 21. Casale Nuovo; 22. Marsala; 23. Castronovo; 24. Milena; 25. Monte Castello; 26. Butermini; 27. Agrigento; 28. Delia; 29. Colmitella; 30. Caltanissetta; 31. Piazza Armerina; 32. Sofiana; 33. La Muculufa; 34. Bitalemi; 35. Cava d’Ispica; 36. Siracusa; 37. Catania; 38. Paterno; 39. Rocchicella; 40. Meri. Copyright CNRS, Orient and Méditerranée, Islam médiévale, H. Renel, V. Sacco. With kind permission of Viva Sacco (published in Sacco 2018, fig. 10)

assigned to Islam, whether in plants, pottery or people, operate at a different pace of change as successive regimes are imposed. From this we will be able to better appreciate how the lives of Sicilians were affected in the theatres of regulation and behaviour that we call public and private.

The aDNA results are subject to a staged gestation in which samples have first to be shown to contain aDNA, then that the DNA is endogenous (that it belongs to the human concerned), has a particular sequence and in selected cases is a candidate for the reading of a whole genome.<sup>49</sup> It is likely that 100 determinations will be possible from 10 cemeteries, roughly 10 individuals in each. Ideally radiocarbon dating will be applied to all so that these individuals will have the task of representing the genetic experience in certain places over seven centuries. This will include an estimate of the homeland of their ancestors. It is intended that the same specimens will be analysed for their diet via carbon and nitrogen signatures and for their mobility through oxygen and strontium, although these methods will explore a larger data set (of 200–300 individuals).

The biomolecular programme will therefore be used to write individual biographies, and from these to define communities that were united in death, although their equivalence with cited belief and ethnicity is not straightforward. Burials of the 8th century excavated in Nîmes were declared as having origins in North Africa.<sup>50</sup> The results of aDNA analysis will be a hundred points of light over the island, but they are likely to tell us something other than a simple demographic trend. One only has to think of the mass of human traffic that characterised the 5th to 13th centuries,

the slaves, male and female, the merchant adventurers and the opportunities for mercenary soldiers. Even the ‘Arab’ army that invaded Sicily in 827 was ethnically heterogenous, as Alex Metcalfe relates, consisting of:

members of the Aghlabid *jund* and *Saqalibah* (slaves of Balkan origin) . . . troops from sub-Saharan Africa, non-Arab Ifriqiyans and an Andalusí force led by a Berber adventurer Asbaghibn Wakil. From 859 a party of Cretan Muslims also joined the fray. These had originally been anti-Umayyad rebels, expelled first from Cordoba, then from Alexandria in Egypt, but who had taken to seaborne conquests, capturing Crete in 826.<sup>51</sup>

The documented deportation of Muslims in the time of Frederick II has been held to account for their disappearance in the 12th and 13th centuries. This has recently been decided as improbable, although what happened to the Sicilian Muslims ‘remains an enigma’ and ‘leaves us with a very pertinent question – where did they go?’<sup>52</sup> It has not been excluded that the radiocarbon dating and aDNA determinations of apparently late groups of burials in the Islamic rite, distributed widely from west to east, will at least match this question with another: ‘who were these people?’

## Conclusion

Archaeology generates results of historical relevance varying from small local stories to broad changes in supply and contact, from the anecdotal to the general. At the large scale, an exercise like the survey of Contessa Entellina, which showed a rise in 10th-century settlement and its diminution

to practically nothing in the 13th, can claim to represent a general trend.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the investigation of the sites at Castronovo, with its Byzantine ‘agro-town’ and stronghold on the Kassar, and the prosperous Islamic-period villages and water-management system that succeeded them, should be indicative of the changing fortunes of farmers and artisans in inland Sicily. At a smaller scale, burnt seeds, animal bones and the contents of cooking pots determined by ORA have the potential to provide a graphic account of how rich and poor are nourished from century to century.

It could be said that applying a large number of different techniques, at different intensities, in different places, risks generating a synthesis that is merely anecdotal and disconnected. But previous experience promises good returns. In Scotland it proved possible to chronicle the changes of ideology at a single rural place, using a structural sequence excavated over half a hectare and containing 191 individuals in three consecutive cemeteries. The function of the site could be correlated with the origins, health, diet and social composition of its inhabitants with the aid of stable isotopes analysis (using C, N, Sr, O) and 72 radiocarbon dates.<sup>54</sup> Such opportunities are uncommon in Sicily (as elsewhere), but there are scientific advantages in the passing of time: new knowledge can be won from past people in ways that were not possible 10, or even two, years ago.

As always there are restrictions imposed by the material available and its condition. Thus the ‘communities’ to be defined by aDNA and stable isotopes will be drawn from those cemeteries having a minimum number of analytically viable human remains: a random sample where the 10 best preserved groups must stand for all. Animal bones and domestic ceramics both require large batches of contemporary material from each site in order to draw statistically valid correlations with husbandry, diet and social practice. *Sictransit* is trying to devise ways of ensuring that all its inquiries are interwoven and mutually supporting, through sampling strategies where the many variables are anchored by at least one common property (for example, they are all focused on the same site and even the same individual). New data can then be anticipated that will inform agriculture and food, especially the available fauna and flora, water management schemes, diet and its correlation with religious affiliation and place of origin; trade as seen in an increasingly better-mapped network of amphorae types and their likely contents; and demography – assigning a ‘persona’ to a number of communities separate from each other in time and space.

The way of archaeology is to surprise, and it may be that by the time *sictransit* finishes in 2021 the surprises will be worth more than the planned synthesis. That will not matter, as the journey is often more informative than the destination. In this journey, many new techniques will have been tried, and mistakes and successes will have been bequeathed, with equal respect, to a land that is among the most archaeologically significant in Europe.

### Participation and acknowledgements

*Sictransit* was initiated by Alessandra Molinari (University of Rome Tor Vergata) and Martin Carver (University of York) in 2014 and obtained funding as an ERC Advanced Grant in

2016 in collaboration with Girolamo Fiorentino (University of Salento). In this partnership, Professor Molinari and the University of Rome provide expertise on early medieval Sicily, the University of York provides the bioarchaeological research programme via the laboratories of BioArCh (Biology, Archaeology and Chemistry) directed by Oliver Craig, and the University of Salento is undertaking palaeobotanical research at the Laboratories at Lecce, directed by Professor Girolamo Fiorentino. Our main debt of gratitude is to those archaeological colleagues working in Sicily who have provided us with samples from their excavations, in many cases in course of preparation for publication, especially Lucia Arcifa (Castello San Pietro, Rocchicella, Catania, La Villa del Tellaro, with Simona Garipoli), Giuseppina Battaglia (Corso dei Mille), Monica Chiovaro (Palazzo dei Normanni), Caterina Greco (Contrada Sant’Agata), Nicole Mölk (Monte Iato), Carla Aleo Nero (Sant’Antonio), Maria-Serena Rizzo and Zelia Di Giuseppe (Agrigento Quartiere Elenistico-Romano, Colmitella), Rosario di Salvo (anthropology), Viva Sacco (ceramics), Francesca Spatafora (Oratorio del Bianchi, Palazzo Abatellis) and Giorgia Tumulello (Messina). We are also indebted to our field and laboratory teams, our advisory panel and the heritage authorities in Sicily, in particular Stefano Vassallo of the Soprintendenza Archaeologica (Provincia di Palermo), for permission, advice and support at every stage.

### Notes

- 1 For reviews of settlement history, see Molinari 2010, 2013 and 2016, and the themed collections Nef and Prigent 2010, and Nef and Ardizzone 2014; Booms and Higgs 2016.
- 2 See Molinari 2015 for what follows.
- 3 Roger Wilson (1990) was one of the first to apply this term to Sicily.
- 4 Examples at Sofiana (Vaccaro 2013) and Casale San Pietro (at Castronovo).
- 5 This overall sequence aligns in several particulars with documentary and place name research: Nef 2011, Loud 2016.
- 6 Molinari 2015, 219–20.
- 7 This is a project of the Universities of York, Rome and Lecce, funded by ERC (advanced grant 693600) and scheduled to last for five years from August 2016 to August 2021.
- 8 For a standard methodological overview, see Brown and Brown 2011.
- 9 The project began in 2014 and since 2016 has been a combined venture of the Universities of York, Rome Tor Vergata and Salento (Lecce). Progress is reported on our website <http://sicilyintransition.org> and in regular interim reports in *Fashionline* (Carver and Molinari 2016, Carver *et al.* 2018; Carver *et al.* 2019). The biomolecular programme is in the care of the BioArCh laboratories at the University of York. Work on the project began there in October 2017 with the appointment of a PDRA (Léa Drieu) and three PhDs (Aurore Monnereau, Jasmine Lundy and Alice Ughi).
- 10 For Palermo, the Kalbid centre of al-Khalisa has been frequently contacted by modern developers: see papers in Nef 2013, Spatafora and Canzonieri 2014, and Maurici 2015; for Catania, see Arcifa 2010b; for the surveys mentioned, see Aprosio, Cambi and Molinari 1997; Molinari and Neri 2004; Vaccaro 2013; Alfano and Sacco 2014; Corretti *et al.* 2014; Rizzo *et al.* 2014.

- 11 By invitation from Stefano Vassallo of the Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali di Palermo.
- 12 For ceramic stepping stones, see Molinari and Cassai 2006, 2010; Arcifa 2010a, Ardizzone 2010, Arcifa and Bagnera 2014, Sacco 2014, Ardizzone *et al.* 2015.
- 13 Corretti *et al.* 2014.
- 14 Faunal remains specialist to the project and currently a doctoral student at Sheffield University.
- 15 Analytical work relating to *sictransit* has been incorporated into the research programmes being carried out at the Laboratory of Archaeobotany and Palaeoecology, Department of Cultural Heritage, University of Salento (at Lecce) led by Professor Girolamo Fiorentino. The team includes Girolamo Fiorentino (director), Milena Primavera (deputy director), Angela Stellati (Bronte, Verdura (Sciacca), Mazara, Conti-Luna near Sciacca, Burgio near Agrigento, Agrigento QER, Saraceno di Favara, Castronovo and Colmitella), Matilda Stella (Akrai), Ignazio Minervini (Castronovo), Marianna Porta (Mazara), Anna Maria Grasso (seed morphometrics and wood anatomy).
- 16 Pollen analyses are rare but a study at the Largo di Pergusa recorded a vegetation sequence from the period being studied and proposed various models of climatic change (Sadori *et al.* 2013, 2016). See Fiorentino *et al.* 2014 for the application of stable isotope analysis to plants.
- 17 For example, Capelli 2007; Capelli and Orecchioni forthcoming.
- 18 Evershed 2008; see Brown and Brown 2011, 55 ff., 193.
- 19 Bevan 2014; Drieu *et al.* forthcoming.
- 20 Pecci *et al.* 2017.
- 21 Lundy forthcoming; Lundy and Drieu forthcoming.
- 22 Alexander *et al.* 2014; Ughi forthcoming.
- 23 Brown and Brown 2011, 9 ff. for principles, 168–90 for kinship studies.
- 24 Reich 2018, 107 ff.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 277.
- 26 See Nash 2015.
- 27 Attention was drawn to the site through surface reconnaissance by Angelo Castrorao (Castrorao Barba 2016).
- 28 See Vassallo *et al.* 2015 for the determinant archaeological exploration and study of the site, its fortifications and purpose. See Molinari 2016 for a review of fortified sites in Sicily.
- 29 Excavation directed by P. Orecchioni; study of structures by A. Molinari (Molinari and Carver 2018).
- 30 Research by Nicoletta Giannini.
- 31 Molinari 2015, 190.
- 32 Aniceti forthcoming. She is conducting doctoral research in progress at the Universities of Sheffield and York. Interim results presented at the 7th Postgraduate Zooarchaeology Forum at Palermo (June 2018) are referred to here with her permission.
- 33 For pigs at Castronovo, Casale San Pietro, see Carver *et al.* 2018.
- 34 Davis 2008.
- 35 Malin Holst, Archive report 2014.
- 36 Bourbou 2010, 110, 121.
- 37 Watson 1983 for the original thesis; Chiarelli 2011, 213–22; Fiorentino *et al.* 2014b, 2017 for new investigations of the history of citrus fruits.
- 38 Fiorentino and Zech-Matterne 2017.
- 39 Decker 2009, 199, 201, 259.
- 40 Research at Lecce.
- 41 Ibn Ḥawqal in the 10th century states that sugar was grown in marshlands near Palermo (Sato 2014, 30). Excavations have turned up conical sugar-refining pots in Palermo at 11th–12th-century Corso dei Mille 2014; Civ 144, US6) and in medieval strata associated with four brick-lined kilns at Maredolce (Canzonieri and Vassallo 2014, 275). Sugar pots have also been recognised in the cargo of the 11th-century ‘Marsala A’ wreck (Ardizzone 2010, 63).
- 42 Gutiérrez 2000, 103.
- 43 Bevan 2014; Karagiorgou 2009; Armstrong 2009; Vroom 2017; Drieu *et al.* forthcoming. See Goldberg 2012 for evidence of increased trade recorded in the Geniza documents.
- 44 Amphorae types have been defined, dated, typed by thin section analysis and their distribution mapped in a nearly continuous sequence from the 4th century to the 12th century. Capelli 2007; Capelli and Orecchioni forthcoming; Orecchioni and Capelli forthcoming.
- 45 Of the 10th–11th-century Palermo amphorae Fabiola Ardizzone (2010, 61–2) wrote: ‘It is clear that these containers relate to the export of surplus agricultural products from the hinterland (vegetables, cereals, dried fruit and sugar) and also products from the seafood industry (salted fish)’.
- 46 Sacco 2014.
- 47 Molinari 1997 for the site. See Alexander *et al.* 2015 for a correlation of burial rites and stable isotope measurements with Muslim/Christian alignment and diet in Valencia.
- 48 Many of these are only partially published. We are grateful to colleagues for the supply of samples and contextual information in advance of publication (see acknowledgements). See Di Salvo 2004 for an overview of individuals buried in the Islamic rite.
- 49 Monnereau. 2019.
- 50 Gleize *et al.* 2016.
- 51 Metcalfe 2009, 12.
- 52 Loud 2016, 132, 152.
- 53 Corretti *et al.* 2014.
- 54 This site was at Portmahomack in north-east Scotland. Carver *et al.* 2016a, esp. 333–43

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# Chapter 14

## Norman Identity and the Anonymous *Historia Sicula*

John Aspinwall and Alex Metcalfe  
Lancaster University

### Introduction to the *Historia Sicula*

The *Historia Sicula* is one of a handful of narratives that trace the Normans' rise to power in south Italy during the 11th century and their subsequent conquest of Sicily from the Muslims. The account is also known as the *Cronica Roberti Biscardi et fratrum, ac Rogerii comitis Mileti* as well as the *Anonymous Vaticanus*.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the text appears to offer a mid-12th-century perspective on events of the 1000s. Until the early 1900s, it was quite usual to draw on the *Historia Sicula* for its conquest narrative. Recently, however, it has fallen from academic favour, not least as it covers many of the same episodes as Geoffrey Malaterra's longer *De rebus gestis*. The modern edition of the *Historia Sicula* is still that of Giovanni Battista Caruso from 1723, which was reprinted by Lodovico Muratori three years later.<sup>2</sup> As such, the *Historia Sicula* has slipped between the cracks of current debate: undervalued in terms of historiography, it has also been overlooked for what it can say of the *gens Normannorum*, and the rise and fall of 'Normanness' in the southern Mediterranean.

### Manuscripts, dating and authorship

The *Historia* has been preserved in at least eight manuscripts. Of these, six date to the 16th and 17th centuries.<sup>3</sup> The two oldest, however, are late medieval: one is Latin; the other is a Middle French translation.<sup>4</sup> Both begin with an account of the 'noble' Tancred of Hauteville, and they end with Roger II (d. 1154) as '*rex Siciliae Tripolis Africae potentissimus*'. To this, the anonymous author added an epilogue about Roger to the effect that: 'As I deem the eloquence of Cicero insufficient to praise him and remember the deeds of his great goodness, I, who am no one, would dread to attempt bearing a burden of such gravity that is still unknown to me in the present time'.<sup>5</sup>

In MS Vaticanus Latinus 6206 (hereafter Vat. lat.), this self-referential passage is closed by a final exhortation adapted from St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: '*Amen dico vobis dum tempus habetis, operamini bonum ad omnes*'. Immediately after this, a deliberate break of two blank lines separates the text from a version of the so-called *Annales Siculi* that relates events from 1027 until 1265. Indeed, the short annalistic entries of the *Annales* stand in stark stylistic contrast to any of the preceding narrative of the *Historia Sicula*.<sup>6</sup> Unhelpfully, neither the closing sentence nor the caesura between the two chronicles was recorded in Muratori's edition, thus giving the misleading impression that they form a single account.

For the purposes of this article, the textual differences between the oldest Latin manuscript and later versions are unremarkable, except that the early modern versions omit the author's epilogue.<sup>7</sup> It is worth adding that the later versions include a 1,266-word continuation that extends the narrative from the mid-1100s to 1282. This section is notable for its early reference to William I as 'the bad' because of 'his tyranny over the entire church that destroyed the people of God', and to William II as 'the good, who reverently built many churches for God and the honour of saints such as Santa Maria at Monreale'.<sup>8</sup> Caruso's 1723 printed edition was copied from a transcription of Vat. lat. 6206 to which he added this continuation, taken from Vat. lat. 4936. Muratori's edition of 1726 was taken directly from Caruso's,

and this composite whole was given its present title of *Anonymi Vaticani Historia Sicula ad Petrum Aragonensem*.

The Middle French version of the *Historia Sicula* is bound alongside several other important texts, including the sole surviving copy of Amatus's *Ystoire de li Normant*, in a finely illuminated and well-known 14th-century manuscript. The coverage of events in the French version of the *Historia Sicula* reflects that of the Latin, and the text also concludes with Roger as 'Roy de Sycille, de Tripolle et de Affrica', to which was added an epilogue in the third person to the effect that the author who recounted these events says he lacks the erudition of Cicero to find a way of ending his book.<sup>9</sup> In 1835 Jacques Joseph Champollion-Figeac transcribed the text and gave his printed edition the title of *L'Ystoire de li Normant et la chronique de Robert Viscart*.

The dating argument for the composition of the main narrative is delicately poised. It rests almost entirely on the author's present-tense reference to himself, and to Roger II's continuing achievements as *rex Sicilie Tripolis Africae potentissimus*. This phrase is awkward and its sense ambiguous. It is quite possible that 'Africa' qualifies 'Tripoli' to distinguish the latter from its namesake in the Holy Land. Robert of Torigni may have had this in mind when he remarked that '*rex Rogerius Sicilie Tripolitanam provincia in Affrica super paganos cepit*'.<sup>10</sup> Michele Amari also understood this to mean that Roger was lord of Tripoli, but not of Mahdiya, at this time. Thus, he dated the text's composition to between the fall of Tripoli in June 1146 and the Norman capture of the Zirid capital, Mahdiya, in July 1148.<sup>11</sup> Of note here is that 'Africa' was frequently used to refer to the city of Mahdiya as well as to the wider region. A safer inference about the dating is thus to widen the parameters slightly such that the main pre-*continuatio* text was most likely composed after the fall of Tripoli in June 1146, but before Roger's death in February 1154. Otherwise, there are no unequivocal indications to shed light on the dating argument. Nor can much be said with certainty on the question of authorship, except to note how Count Roger I was said to have piously protected orphans, widows and the poor while founding churches organised 'as in France'.<sup>12</sup> Here, perhaps, we have a faint clue about the anonymous author's possible 'French' origins.

### Composition and content

In terms of content, themes and focus, the vast majority of the *Historia Sicula* concerns the Normans' exploits in south Italy and, in particular, Sicily. The material is arranged in broadly chronological order, but it was in no way the work of an annalistic chronicler. In fact, it contains only a single year date.<sup>13</sup> Instead, the event-based narrative is built around a series of set-piece episodes from south Italian Norman history. The work opens with a long passage concerning the Hautevilles in Normandy under the guidance of their patriarch, Tancred, of whose own ancestry nothing is said.<sup>14</sup> Having dubbed his elder sons William and Drogo, who were to become the first Norman counts of Apulia, the brothers then set out to join George Maniakes' expedition to Muslim Sicily, an episode that is considered at length.<sup>15</sup> On a number of occasions, especially in these longer passages, details are included that do not appear in Malaterra's version of the

same events. Among the most important are particulars relating to Robert Guiscard's furtive visit to Geraci; the battle of Cerami (at which there was an apparition of an unnamed knight with a white banner adorned with a red cross); the sieges of Bari and Palermo; Guiscard's expeditions against Byzantium, and operations against the Muslims in eastern Sicily.

Stylistically, the diction is plain and the vocabulary prosaic, but for a short poem in praise of Guiscard.<sup>16</sup> Throughout, we find the usual prejudices and modes of expression found in contemporary sources, but sometimes with a slight twist. The *gens Graecorum*, for example, were untrustworthy, not because they broke oaths or were faint-hearted in battle, but because 'they hated showing due obedience to the Church at Rome'.<sup>17</sup> However, such is the continual emphasis on the Normans' martial prowess that there are only passing references to the region's peoples, papal diplomacy, external relations or any form of early statecraft.

### The rise and fall of 'Norman' socioreligious identities in the south

Over the past decade or so, and without the help of the *Historia Sicula*, understandings of the *gens Normannorum* and Norman identity have been enriched by a number of interdisciplinary studies into historical sociology, art history, onomastics, social networking, prosopography, municipal governance and comparative political history.<sup>18</sup> Focus has tended to fall on the south Italian mainland, often drawing on a particular region within it.<sup>19</sup> Many have also argued from analogy with an eye on Anglo-Norman England or Norman France.<sup>20</sup> Whatever proxies are used for Norman identity in terms of their traits, traditions, behaviours and political loyalties as viewed through charters and chronicles, a certain consensus has built around the idea that 'Normanness' weakened and even came to be lost in the generations after the conquest of Sicily. It is useful here to make a rough, three-fold distinction between Normans when they were mentioned together as part of group (as viewed mainly through chronicles); Normans in more singular social contexts (for example, as individuals or agents in familial networks, for which evidence is often elicited from charter materials); and the development of Norman rulership, which draws as much from art history as it does from documentary sources, especially after the creation of the kingdom in 1130.

Taking first the Normans when acting in concert where focus has fallen on the portrayal of the early Normans' organisation in war. Here, the first generation of expat *Normannigenae* who fought as mercenaries in Maniakes' Byzantine army did so in units drawn up according to best-fit ethnic divisions.<sup>21</sup> Thereafter, when the Normans came to recruit their conquest armies, they were organised along similar lines. The 'Norman' contingent itself included personnel from elsewhere, like Arduin from northern Italy or Eviscard the Breton, whose death in action the Normans lamented and glorified in song.<sup>22</sup> But whatever *esprit de corps* that combat experience fostered among the knights, the post-conquest rulers increasingly came to rely on standing professional armies.<sup>23</sup> Even during the conquest, 'Norman' contingents were soon in a minority relative to Muslim

troops. Then, as the need for warships became urgent by the early 1070s, the Hautevilles commandeered and developed a fleet manned by Greeks and captained by Arab Christians that then became a prime means of attack.<sup>24</sup> To their chagrin, Norman knights were assigned ever less prominent roles in the military. Indeed, as the need and use of Norman knights diminished, so key formative transmitters of early Norman identity were not reproduced with the same vigour in the post-conquest generation.

### The Norman experience in the south

The Norman conquerors were few in number. At first, they were an unpopular minority immersed in unfamiliar, uncertain and very varied territories.<sup>25</sup> Their literacy levels were low relative to those whose lands they had taken, and it is perhaps unsurprising that their cultural impact was limited. On the mainland, Norman settlement was in areas where their empowerment through acquisition of lands had been closely tied to military success. Further south, in post-conquest Calabria and Sicily, where lands were administered as the personal demesne of the rulers, fiefs held by Norman lords were neither extensive, nor conspicuous.

Normans rarely renamed settlements after themselves as Muslim lords and kin groups had once done, so estates, *castra* or towns with Old French names were exceptional.<sup>26</sup> In the region's crowded linguistic *mélange*, Norman French made only a slight and temporary impression.<sup>27</sup> Knights were not guaranteed holdings even from their own Norman counts: landed properties were not always passed on, renewed or consolidated easily.<sup>28</sup> Across Latin, Greek and Arabic sources, we read of Normans with reason to complain as, indeed, they had done against Guiscard himself.<sup>29</sup> Opposition was sustained for much of the 1100s: after the death of Roger I in 1101, his widow Adelaide del Vasto had been faced with a widespread and sustained revolt of landholders centred on a must-win, key marginal zone of the north Val Démone; her son had spent over a decade fighting to impose his authority on the mainland, and disaffected second- and third-generation Normans were well-known royal opponents during times of open revolt, especially under William I.

The apparent loss of Norman identity has been linked to the fate of their mainland principalities and/or to their histories, the timescale for both of which is similar.<sup>30</sup> However, the assertion is partly self-fulfilling as the main chronicle accounts were composed in the post-conquest period of early state formation in which, necessarily, much was made of the Norman achievement. The subsequent period of Adelaide's regency and of Roger II as Count of Sicily was poorly documented with little charter material and no chronicles or biographies, thus offering meagre pickings for historians. But by the time of Roger II's kingdom in the 1130s and 1140s, political thinking had changed with a kingship that expressed itself in Latin, Greek and Arabic, emulating Byzantine and Muslim models of absolutist rulership in a radical departure from that which had gone before. With cultural appropriation now as a valuable source of power, patronage, validity and refinement – and with the construction of royal palaces as a vehicle for these displays – Norman identity studies for insular Sicily,

unlike those for the mainland, move their attention away from political loyalties, customs or kin-group affiliations and onto royal art, architecture and palace spaces; dress codes, ceremonial and ritual; the trilingual chancery and its multifaith officials; and scholarly patronage in three languages as well as hybrid aspects of palace culture. But as the problems of making sense of an evolving kingship vis-à-vis a changing sense of Normanness multiply with the complexity of evidence that points, or can be made to point, in different directions, so interpretations have correspondingly diversified.<sup>31</sup> For Jeremy Johns, the Rogerian experiment is imagined as a type of social engineering to form a multicultural Sicilian people – the *populus trilinguis* – from the Latins, Greeks and Saracens of the kingdom.<sup>32</sup> For others, the construct of kingship was an artful deception designed to present a different facet of the royal image to awestruck viewers who recognised, and thus validated, those aspects most familiar to them.<sup>33</sup> Taken as a whole, the kingship might also be seen as an elaborate political theory in which the king was the embodiment of the world's peoples over whom he ruled.<sup>34</sup> Or else, the kings, as heirs and successors of the Byzantines and Muslims, had adopted and combined the manners and customs of the region's imperial rulers to furnish them with all their legitimising panache of power and culture.<sup>35</sup> Unsurprisingly, hypotheses about political theory and Sicilian kingship are endless, but what is striking in all such discussions is how little room is left for 'Normanness'.

### Post-conquest contexts and comparisons

Looking back to the north, there are a number of important 'familial resemblances' between Norman Sicily and Anglo-Norman England. For example, the importance they attached to kin groups; the prestige roles of knights as a social and military elite; their prowess in battle; the use of terror tactics in the countryside; alliances sworn with old enemies; their rise as landlords, counts, dukes and kings; and their reputation for building works, reception halls and visible dominance in enclosed defences, as well as aspects of court life, pleasures and pursuits, traditions and customs. All these invite comparison, as do their use of law-making, chroniclers, patronage of the Church, and written record-keeping systems in economically vibrant regions with established lordships. As such, it is perfectly *possible* to make arguments from analogy, even if only at a macroscopic level by identifying similarities between the Normans' actions, behaviours, aspirations and outlooks wherever they were. Thought-provoking as points of comparison are – perhaps especially during the conquest periods – the contrasts in the polities that emerged cannot be overlooked: the Anglo-Norman England of Henry II was quite unlike Roger II's Sicily where many aspects of society, religion, law, language, customs, culture, the arts, political thought and concepts of sacral monarchy can be described in fundamentally different terms. The sociocultural asymmetry of Sicily to Normandy or Anglo-Norman England cannot only be reckoned in terms of population base and religious difference, but also by the cash-rich, trans-Mediterranean ambience of Sicily.<sup>36</sup> Sicily's peoples had long been exposed to the concept of socioreligious and ethnic difference, and at

their porous margins this had produced important gateway communities. Prominent among these were power-broking, Arabic-speaking 'Greek' Christians, who exerted their influence as trusted and knowledgeable allies of the Normans, occupying key positions of executive authority until the mid-1100s, and providing the kingmaker figures of Christodoulos and George of Antioch.<sup>37</sup>

In the post-conquest era, the multifaith and multilingual environment of insular Sicily was well known for its transcultural fluidity that found expression across a range of media: documentary, archaeological and art historical. For over two centuries, its blended living spaces and demographics of shifting ethnic and faith communities worked to deconstruct societal boundaries, and to allow a high level of intermingling, assimilation and acculturation, not only in cosmopolitan urban spaces, but also in the countryside. Exogamous, interfaith and interethnic marriages were attested; religious conversions were not uncommon; bi- and plurilingualism were unexceptional; some islanders had adopted mixed or alternative personal names and nicknames; Sicily had developed its own manners and customs that had given rise to distinctive dress codes as well as a hybrid of artistic, literary and architectural models that were striking to outsiders, unfamiliar with the island's ways and standard of living. The Norman rulers were by no means unreceptive to such influences: indeed, the most conspicuous forms of adoption were to be found in comital and royal circles.

### **Naming patterns and the loss of Norman identity markers**

Beyond these contexts, proxy evidence for the waning of Normanness in Sicily has largely depended on presuming to identify individual Normans by name in charters or chronicle accounts. In Greek and Arabic sources, the Normans were Φράγκοι or *al-Ifranji*; the ethnonym 'Norman' was not otherwise attested, although al-Idrīsī gave a brief description of Normandy itself, and in south Italian Greek we find the transcribed name, Γουλιέμος Νορμανδέλλος.<sup>38</sup> In Latin, the first instance of the personal name 'Noremannus' in south Italy dates from 990, almost a decade before the semi-legendary appearance of 40 Norman pilgrims-cum-mercenaries at the Muslim siege of Salerno.<sup>39</sup>

In such cases, especially in charter material, the detection of Normans rests on some much-criticised assumptions about naming and identity.<sup>40</sup> Those difficulties are, however, important. Even if we do not accept that a change of name necessarily equates to a corresponding change of identity, or that ethnicity can be safely inferred from a personal name, names can provide a large set of comparable data. In south Italy and Sicily, changes to naming patterns also help to explain the loss of certain indicators of identity, and thus why Normans were less apparent in many post-1100 sources. In this respect, naming patterns in south Italy and Sicily – whether Arab Muslim, Byzantine Greek or of the Latin West – were undergoing broadly similar long-term change towards bipartite structures.<sup>41</sup> These often expressed an agnatic relationship, but there was also a strong tendency towards the use of occupational names, locatives and, in particular, nicknames. Indeed, the *'ngiurie* tradition of family

nicknames that were passed down through successive generations in lieu of a formal surname has endured in Sicily, Calabria, Puglia and Basilicata until the modern period.<sup>42</sup>

The two-part naming pattern equally applied to Normans, whose use of mononyms in a 'Frankish' tradition had hitherto been common, and even to Arab Muslims, whose segmentary naming patterns were far lengthier.<sup>43</sup> With a gradual convergence of municipal, notarial and chancery practice, bipartite naming became ever more standard in written texts as legal and/or fiscal identifiers. One of the losers in this defining trend was the decline, but not the total demise, of ethnonyms such as 'Norman'. To take an illustrative example: in January 1094, a knight called Geoffrey the Norman, whose nickname was 'Planca rota' (literally 'broken bench', or perhaps figuratively 'bankrupt'), purchased an olive grove near Bari from a certain Maurus.<sup>44</sup> Sixty years later, in October 1151, we find an exchange of land in which there was a passing reference to the same Geoffrey Plancarota, who by now had lost the epithet 'Norman'.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, having tracked the eclipse of the term 'Normannus' through swathes of similar charter material, Graham Loud concluded that: 'The picture is surprisingly clear and supports what we have already noted for the chroniclers of the age of King Roger. After c.1130 any use of the word *Normannus* is increasingly rare'.<sup>46</sup>

Now, let us return to the *Historia Sicula* of the mid-1100s because it presents a very different picture. Whoever composed it had made a conscious decision to assemble a text in which the primary emphasis fell directly on the *Normanni*. This term occurs 77 times: almost once every 150 words throughout the text. By way of comparison, Malaterra's *De rebus gestis* is three times the length of the *Historia Sicula*, but there are barely half the references to *Normanni*. As such, the *Historia Sicula*, composed at the height of King Roger's reign, is precisely a text in praise of the Normans and their Hauteville leaders. Who, then, were the Normans of the *Historia Sicula*?

### **The Normanni and Normannigenae of the Historia Sicula**

A striking feature of the narrative is how it presented the Normans and Hautevilles as both pious warriors and legitimate successors. Even Roger's wife, Adelaide, was descended from the noble bloodline of Charlemagne.<sup>47</sup> The Normans' divinely guided conquest mission was clearly laid out from the start: 'Their father, Tancred, with most honest holiness by which he himself also flourished, instructed these sons, who were 12 in number, not without the admirable direction of God, to be the most holy defenders of the Apostolic Church and the most resilient destroyers of Muslim wickedness'.<sup>48</sup>

Picking up the theme of *honestas* as a Norman trait, the Hautevilles were epitomes to emulate: Tancred's younger sons William and Mauger inherited their father's integrity, while Roger was an example of reputable piety to all men.<sup>49</sup> Even when the Normans burst into tears – as they did in all the south Italian chronicles – they did so as a frank expression of relief or unfettered display of sincerity.<sup>50</sup>

The Normans were God-sent deliverers from the chaos and desperation of the Byzantines, who had not only

oppressed the population with taxes that were as heavy as the tribute exacted by the Muslims, but were also so militarily weak that they had relinquished lands they could no longer hold.<sup>51</sup> To this end, the Normans were also champions of the Latin Church: at Civitate, Tancred's younger son Humphrey was confirmed as its 'most holy protector' after Pope Leo IX had 'not only concluded everlasting peace with him, but had also appointed him as the standard-bearer of the Roman mother Church and its defender'.<sup>52</sup> In return, God had granted the Normans success. At the siege of Syracuse in 1085, pious Roger was rewarded with a miracle when the fleet effortlessly reached their desired destination without the need of sails, wind or rowers.<sup>53</sup> Deliverance was to be accomplished on the battlefield: 'bravely' (*viriliter*) and with 'strength [of mind]' (*virtus*).<sup>54</sup> At Cerami, the Normans 'did not stop killing until they had sent down 20,000 souls to Hell from among the [Muslim] knights alone'.<sup>55</sup> Throughout the *Historia Sicula*, the audience receives a clear and positive view of archetypal Normanness in terms of its simple piety, forthright sincerity and manly virtue.

In the Islamic world the Normans, like other Franks, were laughably famed for their boorishness.<sup>56</sup> In Malaterra, the Normans were vengeful, grasping, determined and dangerous: fitting expectations that were ideal for a conquest narrative and that were not so easy to ridicule. But could such typecasting ever have been taken seriously as absolute and unerring definitions of a 'people', especially in the complex polyethnic flux of Sicilian society? Unsurprisingly, the idea that even Norman identity was a flexible construct is found in both Geoffrey Malaterra and William of Apulia, as well as in the *Historia Sicula*.

### Becoming Sicilian and becoming Norman

Of Malaterra's background, only limited biographical details have survived, although it has long been suspected that the monk was himself a Norman.<sup>57</sup> Recent studies corroborate this idea with some plausible, if not compelling, possibilities.<sup>58</sup> From his own pen, we know that he had 'come from regions beyond the Alps; I have recently become Apulian and, most recently of all, Sicilian'.<sup>59</sup> The claim is an intriguing one and reveals his belief that ethnicity could change according to context and situation. Moreover, it accords well with William of Apulia's claim that whenever the Normans saw anyone coming to join them, 'they taught their own customs and language – a people formed as one', thereby showing how they were both willing and able to absorb others into their own people (*gens*) through acculturation.<sup>60</sup>

As for the *Historia Sicula*, it also offers a view of a 'people' who could assimilate others. A remarkable passage relates to the religious conversion of Elias Cartomensis, who was later killed for apostasy at the hands of his erstwhile Muslim co-religionists 'because he refused to deny Christ'.<sup>61</sup> Elias had played a vital role in raising local troops in Sicily for the Norman army. He was also a brave and respected knight. The author of the *Historia Sicula* directly compared him with an exemplary Norman, Robert of Sourdeval:<sup>62</sup> 'There followed Robert of Sourdeval, an outstanding Norman (*Normannigena*) knight, and Elias, who was first a Muslim, but

then a Christian by faith, a gallant, high-minded destroyer of the heathen race in the way of the army and the custom of the Normans, having learned much in noble circles'.<sup>63</sup>

Elias had not only converted to Christianity, but had also become so akin to his Norman comrades by his own decisions and actions that he had *become* a bona fide Norman. Moreover, the incident expounds the process of ethnic transformation by showing the effects of choice and acculturation. As such, the *Historia Sicula* confirms how even arch-enemies of the faith could be assimilated into their own group, in contrast to the exclusivist medieval concept of a 'race' that was fixed by birth and blood alone.

Through its repeated references to *Normanni*, the *Historia Sicula* confounds and contradicts the received wisdom that, as a marker of Norman identity itself, such nominal references had gradually disappeared in the generation after the conquest, and were few and far between after 1130. The evidence offered by the *Historia Sicula* is therefore anomalous and somewhat easier to describe than to explain. Michele Amari, who made extensive use of the *Historia Sicula*, may have been right to think that it was composed in a reflective tradition at a time of shifting values.<sup>64</sup> The account selectively replayed and perpetuated well-known episodes from the Norman Conquest for an intended audience who had itself experienced immersion into south Italian or Sicilian society over two, three or more generations. By evoking memories of the conquest era in a very different age of a multifaceted Sicilian kingship in which neither second/third-generation Norman knights nor a sense of 'Normannitas' had made much impact on royal agendas under Roger II, its appeal was perhaps greatest for a limited number of south Italian *Normannigenae*. However, Amari was perhaps wise to confine his speculation. In the heady days of the mid-to-late 1140s – at a time of Norman expansion in an uncertain and changing Mediterranean, at the height of Roger's power before a backlash of Latin lords destabilised the kingdom and in a period of some very varied royal projects – the possibilities that may or may not have informed its composition are many. Exceptional as the evidence from the *Historia Sicula* is, it is more than sufficient to redefine the limits of current debate. In so doing, it opens up an important lost track of inquiry into the south Italian Normans, their histories, historiography and identities.

### Notes

- 1 Champollion-Figeac 1835, lxviii–civ; Wilmans 1851, 122–30; Amari 1933–9, 3/1, 24–9; Heskell 1891; Pontieri 1927–8, xiv–xxix; Kujawiński 2010, 91–136; Stanton 2012, 79–94. See also Kujawiński 2019, 115–29.
- 2 G.-B. Caruso (ed.), *Bibliotheca Historia Regni Siciliae, sive Historicorum qui de rebus Siculis*, 3 vols, Palermo, 1723, reprinted in L.A. Muratori (ed.), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores: Anonymi Historia Sicula a Normannis ad Petrum Aragonensem*, 8 vols, Milan, 1726, 8, cols 744–80; henceforth, *Historia Sicula*.
- 3 According to the catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin 5911 is a 16th-century codex; MS Latin 6176 dates to the 17th century. MS XXII.52 and V.G. 31 are held in the Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Naples. MS XXII.52 dates to the 16th century and V.G. 31 to the late 17th century. Held in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Rome, Vat. lat. 4936 dates

- to the 16th century. We are grateful to Jakub Kujawiński for his communication that there exists another manuscript witness in the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome. MS 277 is an Italian translation of MS XXII.52 and dates to the 1640s. In 1723 Caruso claimed that Giovanni Filingerius had transcribed a version of the text using the Vatican manuscripts. See *Historia Sicula*, iiiii. If this manuscript has survived, then its location is unknown.
- 4 Vat. lat. 6206 is held in the Vatican Library and can be dated to the 14th century on the basis of palaeography. A colophon on the inside cover records that the volume had been ‘lost and long sought after in vain [until] Pope Clement XI recovered and ordered [it] to be returned to the Vatican Library on 6 October 1713’. The Middle French version, MS Français 688, is held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. Various 14th-century dates for its composition have been proposed. For a date between 1305 and 1314, see Delarc 1892, vii–lxxi; for a date after 1343 or 1349, see Gasperoni and Maffei 1996, 53–80; for a date between 1305 and 1310, see Dunbar and Loud 2004, 18–23; for its composition in Italy post-1343, see Kujawiński 2010, 91–136. The concluding passages of the *Historia Sicula* are also found as a brief continuation to Malaterra’s *De rebus gestis* (Malaterra 1927–8) in a 15th-century manuscript held in the Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon (MS 675, fol. 98r.); in a 14th-century manuscript of the Società Siciliana per la Storia Patria in Palermo (MS IB 28), and in a 16th-century manuscript from the Biblioteca comunale in Palermo (MS. Qq. E.165, fols 137v–38r). A subsection of these same passages recording the death of Simon and the accomplishments of Roger II also appears in the *Epistola fratris Conradi* that dates to 1290. The only known copy of the *Epistola* is a previously unrecognised early 18th-century manuscript held by the Biblioteca Comunale in Palermo (Qq D 47 fols. 88r–91v, at fols. 89r–89v). The text was published in Muratori 1726, 1–2, 277–9, at 278b–c.
  - 5 ‘ad cuius laudes, et gesta probitatis singulariter referenda, quoniam Ciceronis eloquentiam insufficientem fuisse reputo, ego qui fere nullus sum tantae gravitatis onus mihi adhuc incognitum in praesenti temptare formido’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 299v, col. b; *Historia Sicula*, col. 777e.
  - 6 *Annales Siculi*, in Malaterra 1927–8, 115.
  - 7 For a detailed exploration of the textual differences between the *Historia*’s manuscripts, see the observations in Kujawiński 2019.
  - 8 ‘in successorem suum legitimum Guilielmum malum, qui sua tyrannide totam ecclesiam et Dei populam destruebat, de quo Guilielmo pessi monatus est Guilielmus bonus, qui multas ecclesias ad Dei et sanctorum honorem reverensiter construxit videlicet Sancti Mariae de Monriale’. Vat. lat. 4936, fol. 25r; *Historia Sicula*, col. 778c.
  - 9 ‘Et dist lo maistre qui raconte li fait de cestui et sa grant loengeque non suffroit la sagesce de Tullie et ensi met fin de son livre.’ MS Français 688, fol. 212r, col. II; Champollion-Figeac, 1835, 263–313, at 313.
  - 10 Delisle 1872–3, I, 242; cf. also, Falcandus, ‘Tripolim namque Barbariae, Affricam, Faxum, Capsiam aliasque plurimas barbarorum ciuitates multis sibi laboribus ac periculis subiugauit’, in D’Angelo 2014, 56.
  - 11 Amari 1933–9, 3/1, 27, n. 1. See also the summary in Stanton 2012, 84. In the Caruso/Muratori edition, the introduction of commas (thus: ‘rex Sicilie, Tripolis Africae, potentissimus’) suggests a similar interpretation to Amari’s; *Historia Sicula*, col. 777a. On the short-lived use of royal titles relating to Ifriqiya, see Johns 1987, 89–101.
  - 12 ‘iuxta Gallientum religiose’, Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 299v, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 777a. The Middle French version also includes this same idea (‘Et secont l’usance de France les ordena religioisement’). MS Français 688, fol. 212r, col. b; Champollion-Figeac 1835, 312.
  - 13 *Historia Sicula*, col. 769a, for the date of Guiscard’s expedition.
  - 14 The only source to mention Tancred’s father is al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Khabar ‘an al-bashar*, 5, MS Fatih 4340 (Istanbul), fol. 263a: ‘Then Count Roger, son of Yanqir [Tancred], son of Khīra, lord of the city of Malītuw [Mileto]...took Sicily from the hands of the Muslims in the year 464 [29 September 1071–17 September 1072]’. Khīra does not obviously correspond to any Norman or Norse personal name. However, Khīra (and Khayra) is an Arabic female name. The form Ibn Khīra (‘son of Khīra’) follows that of a pejorative nickname in Arabic by suggesting that the father’s name was not known. I would like to thank Frédéric Bauden for bringing this manuscript to my attention. A critical edition is in preparation under the direction of Mayte Penelas.
  - 15 For the rare example of dubbing: ‘Gullielmo et Drogus arma...militaria a patre suo acceperunt, et ab eodem honorifice, ut tales et tanto viro genitus decebat milites ordinati sunt’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 290r, cols a–b; *Historia Sicula*, cols 745c–746a. On the expedition of Maniakes, see *Historia Sicula*, cols 747–50.
  - 16 Guiscard was described in glowing terms: ‘Optimus ille ducum Normannae gloria gentis. / Miles militiae decus exemplum probitatis viribus expertus validis animoque Robertus / Viscardus cunctis animosior atque secundus / nulli’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 292r, col. b; *Historia Sicula*, col. 754a–b.
  - 17 ‘quod graecorum gens infidelissima debita Romane ecclesiae obediā exhibere contempnebat’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 296r, col. b; *Historia Sicula*, col. 768a.
  - 18 Loud 1982, 104–16; Loud 2013, 35–56; Panarelli 2013, 189–201.
  - 19 Skinner 1995; Drell 2002; Cuzzo 1996, 45–56. See also Heygate 2013, 165–86.
  - 20 Wolf 1995; Shopkow 1997; Johnson 2004, 85–100; Webber 2005; also Sartore 2013, 184–203.
  - 21 The repeated use of *Normannigena* in the *Historia Sicula* (cols 752d, 764b, 765a, 768c, 773b, 774b) is more closely associated with history-writing of the 12th century when there had developed a finer distinction between those born in Normandy and second-generation Normans in south Italy. In northern authors the term was used infrequently, but it often referred to south Italian Normans. See, for example, *Gestis Ducum Normannorum, Continuatione Roberti* 42, MGH SS, 26, 8; Robert of Torigni 1889, 4, 116; Henry of Huntingdon 1996, VI.22, 376.
  - 22 ‘Harduinum quendam Italum, qui ex nostris erat’, Malaterra 1927–8, I.8, 11–12. Arduin was a Greek-speaking vassal of Archbishop Ambrose of Milan, and also claimed to have business dealings in Calabria. See William of Apulia 1961, I.206–22, 110; Amatus of Montecassino 1935, II.14, 72–3; Skylitzes 1973, 425–6. For Eviscardus, see Malaterra 1927–8, 3.15–17, 66. Of note were 60 ‘slavi’, presumably *ṣaqālība* troops from the former Kalbid army who joined Guiscard in Calabria in 1054, *ibid.*, I.16, 16; for both Calabrians and Apulians at the siege of Palermo, see *ibid.*, II.45, 52, and William of Apulia 1961, III.235, 176.
  - 23 On the importance of timely salary payments to the army, see Alexander of Telesse 1991, IV.4, 83.
  - 24 On the development of the Norman fleet, see Stanton 2011.
  - 25 For the often-cited estimate that only two-thirds to three-quarters of migrants to south Italy were actually from Normandy itself, based on names, see Ménager 1975, 259–390; Loud 2013, 39–41.

- For terms of reference to Normans as ‘Franci’, ‘Transmontani’ or, in a higher register, ‘Galli’ or ‘Latini’, see Bull 1997, 195–211.
- 26 For example, Baṭṭallāruw in western Sicily that took its name after its Norman lord: ‘dicitur Batallarum, quia eius dominus dicebatur Goffridus Battallarius et ob defectionem omnia bona illius Rex Guillelmus concesserat anno 1178 ecclesiae Montis regalis’. Pirri 1733, 702. The eponym is from old French *bataillier* ‘warrior’ or late Latin *batellarius* ‘boatman’. Godefroy 1901, 49; Niermayer 2001, 87. For a diachronic view of settlement in the zone near the early Norman foundation of San Salvatore at Patti and the unusual presence of Norman toponyms such as Gioiosa Guardia and San Marco (and also possibly Oliveri and Capo d’Orlando), see Fasolo 2013–14, I, 145–51, and 2, 22–5, 129–30, 221–8, 246. See also Fasolo 2008 for an important regional study of toponymy and archaeology in the early Norman period.
- 27 Von Falkenhausen 1980, 221–45. Várvaro 1980, 199–213, and Várvaro 1973, 72–103.
- 28 During the regency of Adelaide, a certain Gervaise sought her permission to wed the widow of Richard Malet, who had received an estate from Roger I. See Collura 1954, 2 vols, 2, 595–603, no. 1.
- 29 William of Apulia 1961, I, 509–511, 192.
- 30 Brown 1992, 191–210; Albu 2001, 221.
- 31 For example, on the changing form and function of the increasingly Latinised and Christianised space of the Cappella Palatina, see Tronzo 1997.
- 32 ‘[I]deology alone inspired the development of trilingual epigraphy...which proclaimed the policy of *populus trilinguis*, that the unifying power of the king had forged the three communities of the island into a single Sicilian people’, Johns 2006, 2, 324–37, at 332; also Johns 2002, 284–6.
- 33 For the merits and pitfalls of some of these notions, see Metcalfe 2009, 247–50.
- 34 Cf., for example, the image of the Staufien king, Conrad, as a world ruler in Peter of Eboli 1994, 231.
- 35 On this idea, see the dated but perceptive article of Gabrieli 1964, 57–65, in which comparison is also made between the Normans and the early Umayyads vis-à-vis emulation of the Byzantines as their heirs and successors.
- 36 Loud 1999, 815–43.
- 37 Johns 2002, 69–74 and 80–90.
- 38 For William Normandellos, who was attested in 1179, see *Syllabus Graecarum membranarum* 1865, 225 and 558. For al-Idrīsī’s reference to the ‘lands of Normandy, Lorraine and Flanders’ (*bilād Nurmandiya wa-bilād L. hrnkawa-bilād Ifland.s*), see Duchène 2010, 7 and 54 (of passing note is that, in the same work, al-Idrīsī referred to al-Andalus as *bilādīnā*). See also the longer description of northern France in al-Idrīsī 1975, 2, 861, 864, 866, 869–70, 874; on the development of Muslim perceptions of non-Muslim lands and peoples, see König 2015, esp. chapters 6–8.
- 39 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis* 1875, 2, 288. For the Normans at Salerno and the Melus revolt of 1016–17, see Amatus 1935, I, 16–21, 21–8. Slender as this evidence is, it tilts the balance in favour of a Norman presence a generation before the Melus revolt, *pace* Chalandon 1907, I, 48–50. For the historiography, see Loud 2000, 60–80.
- 40 On this, see Heygate 2013, esp. 169–70 and 180–4.
- 41 Korhonen 2011, 147–74. More generally for south Italy, and with reference to the important conferences held at the École française de Rome in the 1990s, see Martin 2002, 109–18.
- 42 For examples of *ngiurie* in the modern period, such as Caracò (< Greek *kórax* ‘crow’), Piscialettu (‘bed-wetter’; cf. many others formed with this affix) or Žizzù (< Arabic ‘*az̄z̄* ‘elegant’), see Rohlfs 1984, 39, 101 and 141.
- 43 By the time that the Rollus Rubeus list of Muslim ‘villeins’ was composed in the 1200s, the loss of *nasabs* (e.g. ibn ‘son of/clan of’) and *nisbas* (especially ethnonyms and locatives) in favour of isms (given or first names) is quite evident. Mirto 1972, 39–41. In the modern period, most surviving Sicilian surnames of Arabic origin are formed from Arabic first names.
- 44 ‘vendidi Goffrido Normanno cui cognomen est Planca rota, filio Roggerii habitatori predicto loco Tellizzou nam clausuram olivarum’. *Codice diplomatico Barese: Le Pergamene della cattedrale di Terlizzi (971–1300)* 1899, 45–6, at 45.
- 45 ‘tertio a medio limite est terra Gofridi Plancarotue militis filii Umfridi Plancarotue militis ipsius civitatis...’, *ibid.*, 85–6, at 85.
- 46 Loud 2013, 41.
- 47 ‘a nobilissimo Caroli magni sanguine’ Vat. Lat. 6206, fol. 299v, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 777a. On Adelaide’s Aleramici background, see Pontieri 1955, 2, 327–430; Houben 1996, 81–114; Von Falkenhausen 1998, 87–115.
- 48 ‘Hos autem non sine admiranda Dei dispensatione duodenarium complentes numerum quippe sanctissimos, apostolicae ecclesiae futuros defensores et Saracenicae pravitate fortissimos extirpatores, pater Tranchedus honestissima sanctitate qua et ipse pollebat informavit’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 290r, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 745c.
- 49 ‘duos fratres suos Malgerium et Guilielmum eodem patre genitos, eademque morum honestate conspicuos, *Historia Sicula*, col. 753d; honeste sanctitatis exemplum cunctis existeret’, *ibid.*, col. 777c.
- 50 In no way did the Normans’ crying imply emotional inadequacy, effeminacy, pity or loss of dignity in any of the south Italian chronicles. When William and Drogo reached their compatriots in Apulia, they tearfully considered their honesty more than their patriotism or their ancestors. Later, on the return of an unnamed Norman (*Normannigena*) from combat outside Palermo, his comrades wept over his anticipated death and did not stop covering him with kisses. *Historia Sicula*, cols 746b and 765a.
- 51 ‘In iisdem temporibus divina flagellatio cuius occulta sunt iudicia totam Apuliam atque Calabriam Constantinopolitano imperatori non regnandas sed lacerandas reliquerat ad quorum liberatione Deo miserantur certum est Normannos ad venisse. Erat enim tanta et tam miserabilis utrisque gentis oppressio quod praeter importabile onus servitii et infinitos redditus et tributa quae praedicto tyranno ipsos oportebat solvere non minus Saracenis per singulos annos tributariae pro redemptione suorum capitum indefensi a suis gentis cogebant reddere vel sine dubio mortem aut captivitatem perpetuam sibi et uxoribus suis ac liberis expectare. Et quia iam ad tantam calamitatem res ipsas pervenerat quod nocuerat imperatorem vel terras ipsas illas omnino Sarracenis relinquere’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 291v, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 747b.
- 52 ‘non solum cum eo pacem perpetuam foedavit, verum et ipsum Romane matris ecclesiae signiferum ac defensorem ordinavit’, Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 292v, col. b; *Historia Sicula*, col. 753c.
- 53 ‘Tantaque miraculi aperitione, dominus haec pia vota consulit ex audisse, certificare dignatus est quod dimissis velis nullo que remigante et penitus cessante aura, recto et veloci cursu, naves ad optatum locum advenere. Quo pius comes et ceteri considerantes securi de victoriam, grates debitas cum laudibus deo referunt’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 298r, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 775a–b; cf. Malaterra 1927–8, 4.2, 85–6, in which divine will stopped short of a miracle.
- 54 In the text, the terms *viriliter* and *virtus* were exclusively applied to

- Norman knights over 40 times. To these may be added almost 50 instances of *audax*, *audacia* and *audaciter*. On similar Norman virtues in Amatus of Montecassino, see Webber 2005, 66–71.
- 55 ‘non prius eos funeste occidendo perse quid miserunt, prius quam vigintimilium animas in solis militibus ad visenda tartaraco egerunt’. Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 295v, col. a; *Historia Sicula*, col. 762b.
- 56 See the well-known passage of Ibn al-Athīr’s in which Roger rejected the arguments of his Frankish allies to go on crusade. Richards 2006, 13.
- 57 For Pontieri, Malaterra was ‘without doubt of Norman lineage’ and associated with the monastery of Saint-Evroul in Normandy, see Pontieri in Malaterra 1927–8, iv. See also White 1938, 105.
- 58 See Lucas-Avenel 2012, 169–92, esp. 180–5; *Histoire du Grand Comte Roger et de son frère Robert Guiscard* 2016, 1, 18–2; Symes 2018, 1073–4.
- 59 ‘a transmontanis partibus venientem, noviter Apulum factum, vel certe Siculum ad plenum’, see *Epistola* in Malaterra 1927–8, 3.
- 60 ‘Moribus et lingua, quoscumque venire videbant, informant propria, gens efficitur ut una’, William of Apulia 1961, I.167–8, 108.
- 61 *Historia Sicula*, col. 774b; cf. Malaterra 1927–8, 3.30, 75. Elias may not have been from Sicily originally. His demonym was Cartomensis, ‘from Cártama’, hence also the modern term ‘Cartameños’. The town is about 20km from Málaga and fell within its politico-administrative orbit in the Muslim period. See also Amari 1933–9, 3/1, 158–9, n. 2.
- 62 Robert of Sourdeval was probably in Bohemond’s south Italian army bound for Jerusalem in 1096, see Paris 2012, 2, 57.
- 63 ‘Quo audito Iordanus filius comitis cum tentum militibus illuc venire festinant. Quem secuti sunt, Robertus de Surdavalle miles egregius Normannigena, et Helyas qui prius fuerat Sarracenus, sed tunc fide Catholicus, et gentilis gentis extirpator magnanimus, usum militie iuxta morem Normannorum satis curia litere doctus’. Vat. lat. 4936, fol. 20r. For the final phrase, Caruso followed Vat. lat. 6206, which appears to read ‘cuilibet electus’, the meaning and sense of which is unclear. *Historia Sicula*, col. 774b. See, Vat. lat. 6206, fol. 297v, col. II.
- 64 Amari said of the *Historia Sicula* that ‘it seems to me to have had a palace source that goes back to 1146; [it] adds a few details according to traditions that agendas of the day were distorting’. Amari 1933–9, 3/1, 27.
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# Chapter 15

## The Swansong of the Multilingual Chancery: Obbertus Fallamonacha's Latin–Arabic Charter of 1242

Nadia Jamil and Jeremy Johns  
University of Oxford

The branch of the trilingual chancery of the Norman kings of Sicily that was responsible for the production of documents in Arabic, including the Arabic texts of bilingual documents, grew from two principal roots. During the conquest, the Norman leaders recruited and employed for their own purposes some of the Arabic scribes who had worked in the administration of Sicily before the conquest. Within a generation, as these scribes reached the end of their working lives, the Norman administration ceased to issue documents in Arabic. For more than 20 years, from 1111 until 1132, no Arabic administrative documents survive. Immediately after the coronation of Roger II on Christmas Day 1130, his chief minister, George of Antioch, oversaw the revival of the Arabic *dīwān*. He did so principally by importing from the contemporary chancery of Fāṭimid Cairo scribes, who brought with them a new chancery script, new diplomatic forms and new bureaucratic offices. Some elements from the Arabic administration of Roger I and his widow, the regent Adelaide, were retained after 1130, and combined with the Fāṭimid imports to produce a distinctively Sicilian *dīwān* that developed independently over the next three generations.<sup>1</sup>

The death of William II in 1189 precipitated a succession crisis and, in the absence of royal authority, elements of the Latin population attacked the Muslims of the island, who fled the cities and the plains and took to the mountains of western Sicily in open rebellion. The Arabic administrators and scribes of the royal *dīwān* were severely depleted. When the German emperor Henry VI occupied Palermo in 1194, he completely reorganised the central administration of the kingdom. The trilingual chancery was abolished and charters were issued only in Latin; none was Arabic, or Greek or bilingual. The death of Henry in 1197 left his widow, Constance, the daughter and heir of King Roger, sole monarch in her own right, and she immediately began to restore her father's multicultural kingdom. The *dīwān* required substantial renovation. With the Fāṭimids gone and Cairo in the hands of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, Constance and her officers could not turn to the Egyptian chancery for help, as her father and George of Antioch had done in the 1130s and 1140s. Indeed, the Arabic text of the one surviving bilingual document issued by Constance closely resembles a type of decree characteristic of the Almohad chancery called the *zāhir*. This indicates that al-Andalus and the Maghrib al-Aqṣā provided the models upon which Constance sought to restore the Sicilian *dīwān*.<sup>2</sup>

Her untimely death on 27 November 1198 brought to a sudden end her attempt to revive her father's multicultural kingdom. Thereafter, almost no trace survives of an Arabic administration in Sicily until, out of the blue, in January 1242, Obbertus Fallamonacha, head of the financial administration of Sicily for Emperor Frederick II, Constance's son, issued the bilingual Latin–Arabic charter that is the subject of this study (**Figs 1–2**).

Why, after more than 40 years during which only Latin documents had been issued, did Fallamonacha suddenly revive the use of Arabic? Upon what diplomatic and literary models was the Arabic text based? And what does our document reveal about Fallamonacha and his administration of Sicily under Frederick II?

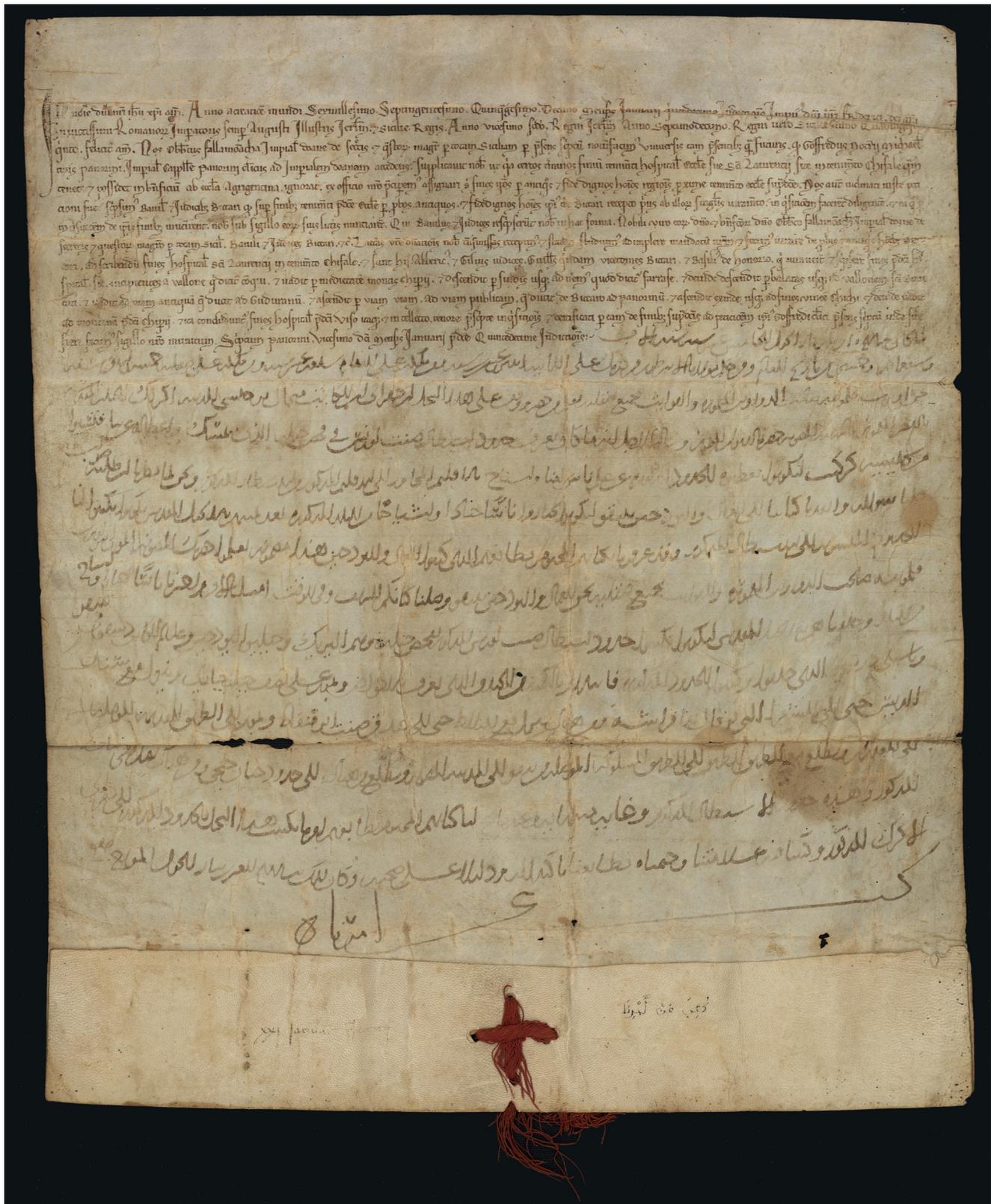


Figure 1 Latin–Arabic record of an inquest to determine the boundaries of the estate of the Hospital of St. Lawrence, Cefalà [Diana], in the district of Vicari, 10 January 6750 AM [AD 1242], Indiction 15, Palermo. Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale, Tabulario no. 21, recto (© Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale)

Geoffrey, son of the notary Michael, a citizen of Palermo, was a cleric of the chapel in the imperial palace in Palermo, better known as the Cappella Palatina.<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey held the Hospital of St. Lawrence in the territory of Cefalà Diana, together with its land, as a benefice from the church of Agrigento (**Fig. 3**).<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey did not know the boundaries surrounding his lands, and so went to the *duana de secretis* in

the palace, and petitioned its director, Fallamonacha, to hold an inquest to establish the boundaries and record them in writing. Fallamonacha agreed, and wrote to the bailiff and justices of Vicari, the chief town of the administrative district in which Cefalà lay, instructing them to hold an inquest among trustworthy elders in order to determine the boundaries, and to report to him in writing and under seal.

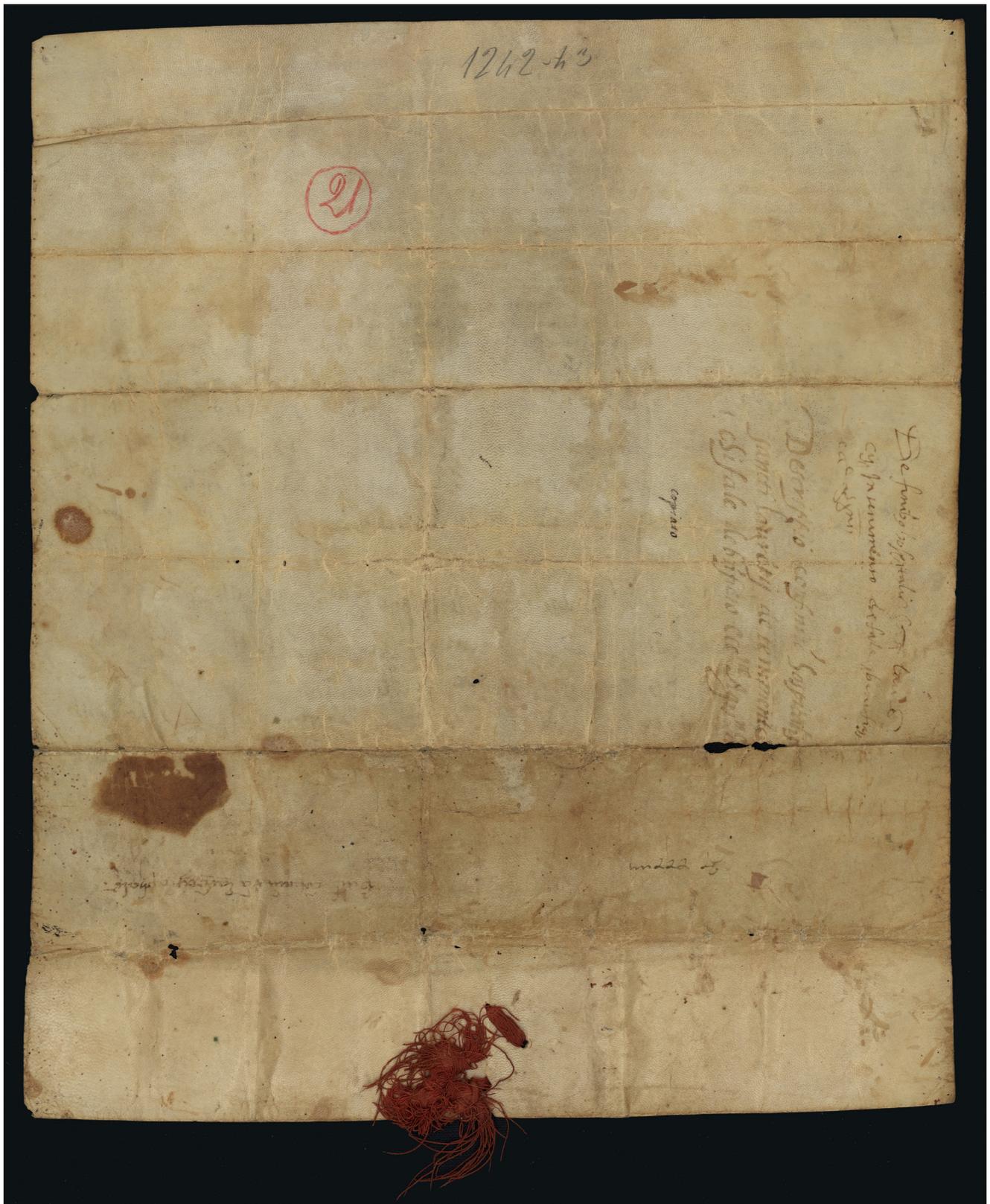


Figure 2 Latin–Arabic record of an inquest to determine the boundaries of the estate of the Hospital of St Laurence, Cefalà [Diana], in the district of Vicari, 10 January 6750 AM [AD 1242], Indiction 15, Palermo. Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale, Tabulario no. 21, verso (© Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale)

The bailiff and justices are not named, but they may perhaps be among the jurors who conducted the boundary inquest: the judges Alberic and Giles, William the former viscount of Vicari, and Basil the son of Honorius (lines 5, 6, 8–9; 17, 20–2). The first three are clearly Latins, while the last may be the son of a Greek mother and Latin father. The text of the first half of their report, including the boundary description,

is incorporated into the bilingual charter. After receiving their report, Fallamonacha ordered our bilingual charter to be composed, signed with his personal *‘alāma* (Fig. 4), sealed with his own seal (Fig. 5) and issued to Geoffrey.

Such inquests, typically provoked by a dispute between neighbours, had been the standard procedure for determining the boundaries of an estate since as early as 1095.<sup>5</sup> The *duana*

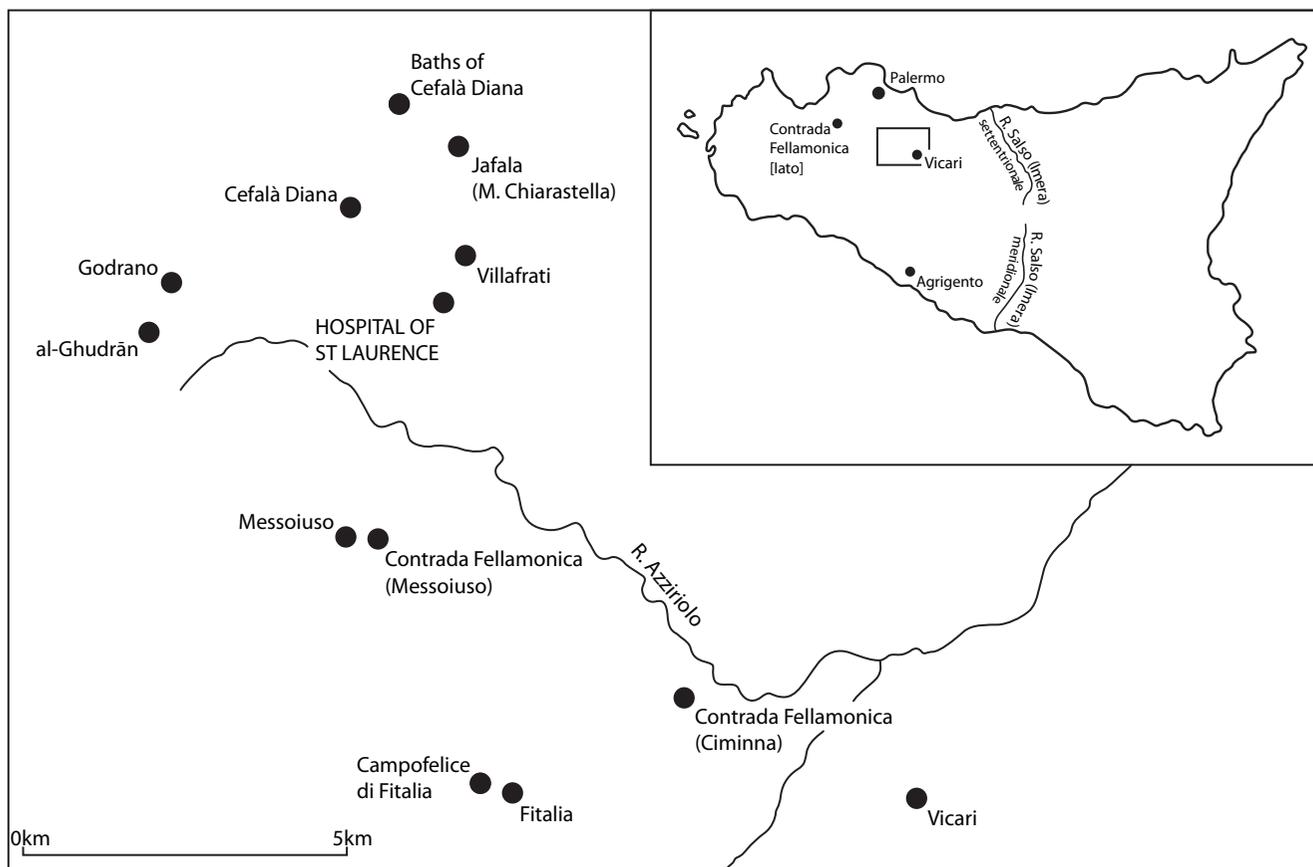


Figure 3 Map showing the principal places mentioned in the text (© Jeremy Johns 2017)

*de secretis* was the Latin name for the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr*, 'the royal bureau of verification', a supervisory office, originally introduced from Fāṭimid Egypt in the mid- to late 1140s in order to oversee the reorganisation of the administration of the possessions of the royal demesne in Sicily and Calabria.<sup>6</sup> The *duana de secretis* maintained the *dafātīr al-ḥudūd*, 'the registers of the boundaries', which, by the end of the reign of William I (1154–1166), listed the boundaries of all fiefs granted since the mid-1140s, and most of the lands of the royal demesne.<sup>7</sup> Under the Norman kings, most, if not all, of the boundaries in the *dafātīr* were recorded in Arabic – a point to which we shall return. The claim made in a writ of Frederick II, dated 1229, that 'the registers of the imperial *duana de secretis*' listed 'the boundaries of every city, castle, *terra* and *casale* in Sicily' is clearly an exaggeration – patently they did not contain the boundaries of Geoffrey's estates – but indicates at least the scope of the *dafātīr al-ḥudūd*.<sup>8</sup>

In our document, the Latin text precedes the Arabic, and the contents of the two are almost identical. The document as a whole comprised three different texts, each with independent origins: the boundary description written on the testimony of the elders of Vicari, which is framed by their report to Fallamonacha, which is in turn framed by the bilingual document that he issued to Geoffrey. It will be helpful to discuss each of these in turn, beginning with the boundary description.

The Latin boundaries are translated from the Arabic. Most of the boundary markers are transliterated more or less phonetically into Latin: *Mons Chiperi* < *Jabal Ḥ. bārī*; *Farrase* < *Farāsha*; *balata* < *al-balāt*; and *vinea Chichi* < *jīnān Ḥijī*. The place name *Vallones Conqui* is a literal translation of

Arabic *al-Aḥwād* (lines 10; 22), and refers to the shape of pools or troughs of water. Most telling of all, the Arabic words *sanad al-dīs*, a topographical description literally meaning 'the acclivity of [the grass called] *dis*' (lines 22–3), have been conflated into *sindis*, a meaningless word, apparently attested just this one time in the Sicilian lexicon.

In contrast, the report of the bailiff and judges of Vicari (lines 7–10; 19–22) was evidently translated from Latin into Arabic. The Latin names of the jurors are simply transliterated into Arabic: *Albericus et Gilius iudices* > *Albārīk wa-Ḥilīyū al-yūḍijīn*;<sup>9</sup> *Guillelmus quondam vicecomes Biccari* > *Ghulīyāl.m al-kāyīn disqūmī bi-Bīqū*; and *Basilius de Honorio* > *Bāsīlī Dānuriyū* (lines 9; 21–2). The conflation of *de Honorio* into *Dānuriyū* suggests that the translator may have reproduced the sound of the Latin without fully appreciating its sense. The meaning of *quondam* may also have escaped him, for *al-kāyīn* seems to imply that William was the current viscount of Vicari (lines 9; 21). He may also have misunderstood the precise significance of the Latin phrases that effect the transition from the report to the boundary description proper for, instead of 'they recorded the boundaries of the aforesaid Hospital, thus: "Beginning from the valley . . ."', he translated 'they recorded the aforesaid boundaries. They began to record from the valley . . .' (lines 9–10; 22). However, he also uses a few standard Arabic forms, which demonstrate that he had received some training within the Sicilian administration. Fallamonacha is addressed as 'Your [God]-protected Presence (*ḥaḍra*), the Lord Sire Ūbart Fallamūnaqa', in place of the Latin 'To the Nobleman and Our Lord and Benefactor, Lord Obbert Fallamonacha' (lines 7; 19–20). In the Norman *dīwān*, the

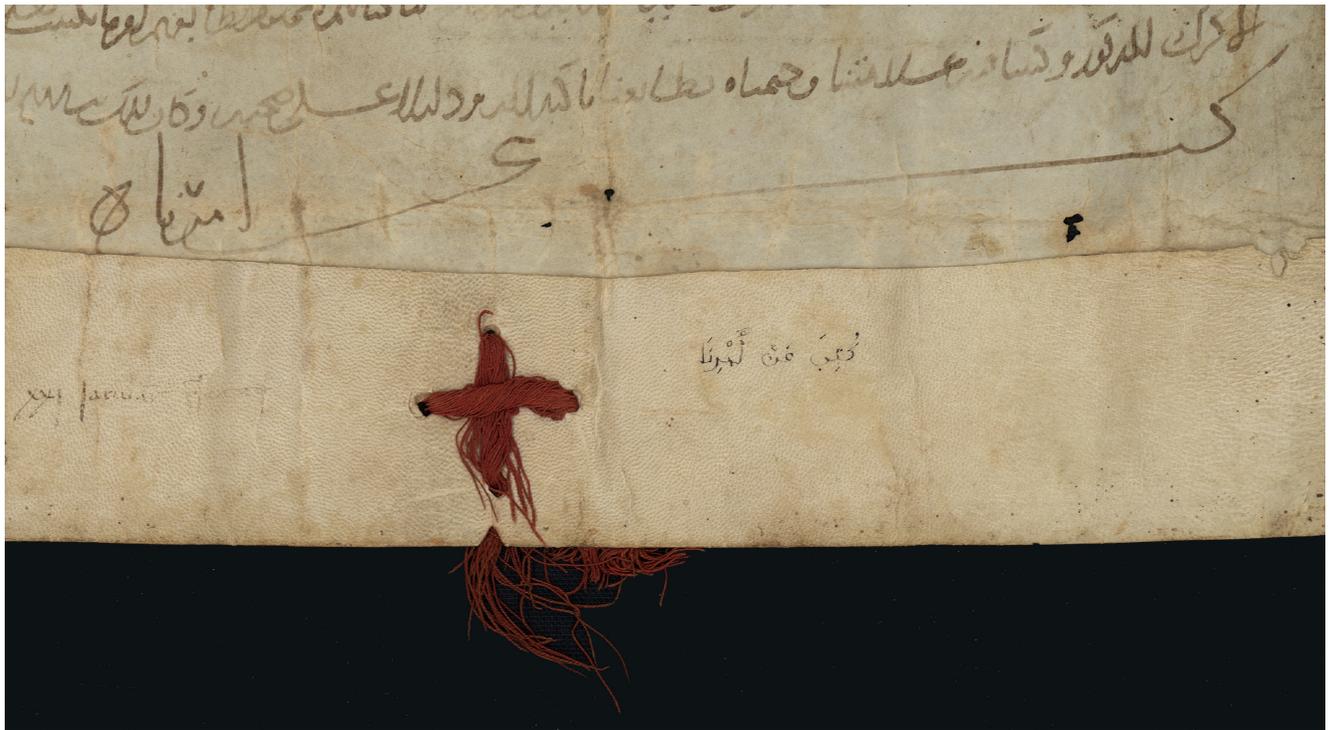


Figure 4 The 'alāma of Obertus Fallamonacha, detail from the Latin–Arabic boundary record of 10 January 6750 AM [AD 1242], Indiction 15, Palermo, Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale, Tabulario no. 21, recto. © Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale

title *al-ḥadra*, literally ‘the Presence’, had been reserved for the king himself,<sup>10</sup> but had now been usurped by his minister. The honorific *Sīr*, presumably from the Old French *sire*, is not attested in the Norman *dīwān* and so may, perhaps, reflect the form of address used to high officials within the palace.<sup>11</sup> Another typically Arabic usage is ‘noble’ (*al-sharīf*) to qualify Fallamonacha’s writ: ‘your noble letter’, instead of the Latin ‘your lordship’s letters’ (lines 9; 20). *Disqūmī*, the term used in the Arabic text for the royal office that William had once held in Vicari, was not coined directly from Latin *vicecomes*, but was rather a standard term that had probably been coined in the Arabic *dīwān*, through the mediation of Greek, before or during the reign of William II (lines 9; 21). Again, while in the Latin text the officials at Vicari simply had the jurors swear, in the Arabic they did so ‘on the Holy Gospel’ (lines 8; 21), adapting a standard formula more commonly used by Muslims taking an oath on the Qur’ān.

The translator of the report presumably also composed the Arabic text of the bilingual document, a highly complex, composite text, in which, at one and the same time, the Latin and the Arabic part each follows its own linguistic traditions, and influences the other, so that both its language and its diplomatic form must be discussed.

To begin with language, certain passages in the *narratio* were clearly conceived in Latin and then translated into Arabic, often attempting a phonetic transliteration of technical terms. The Latin for ‘which he holds and possesses as a benefice’ becomes, in Arabic, ‘which he holds and was given as a *banāfitsiyū*’ (lines 5; 16). Where Geoffrey is described in Latin as ‘a cleric of the imperial chapel’, in Arabic he is ‘*ikrīlik* of the holy *jaballa*’ (lines 4; 15); *clericus* is rendered elsewhere (line 26) with the article as *al-ikrīk*, indicating the translator’s confusion over the position or role of the letter *lām* in the word. In those cases, the translator

seems simply not to have had the Arabic words that he needed. But, when faced with the term ‘a citizen (*civīs*) of Palermo’ (line 3), the scribe was already familiar with *burgīsī* (line 15), a loanword well established in Sicilian Arabic since at least the 1140s. There may even be indications in a few personal names (e.g. *Goffredus* / *Jafṛāy*: lines 3; 15) and other words (e.g. *cappella* / *jaballa*: lines 4; 15) that the orthography of the Arabic was influenced by the pronunciation of Latin in the francophone Norman palace.<sup>12</sup>

The diplomatic forms of both the Latin and the Arabic texts reflect the norms of the old trilingual chancery, but in such a way that sometimes the Latin, sometimes the Arabic, serves as the model for the other. The Latin text (*scriptum*), after the usual *invocatio* (line 1), moves straight into the *datatio* (lines 1–3). The only calendar year given, 6750 AM, is calculated from the creation according to the Byzantine reckoning, a highly unusual, if not unique, feature in a Latin royal document. Here, it presumably follows the practice of Greek–Arabic bilingual documents from the Norman chancery, most of which are dated *anno mundi* (with or without the year of the *hijra*) and never *anno domini* alone; even the Latin–Arabic register of the boundaries of the lands of Monreale gives the year AM, as well as AD.<sup>13</sup> The absence of the year AH from the Arabic text is not unusual in documents of the Norman *dīwān*, but is nonetheless worth noting; the last product of the Norman *dīwān* to survive, the Latin–Arabic decree issued by Constance in November 1198, gave the year AD in the Latin, and AH in the Arabic.<sup>14</sup>

After the day and Julian month, comes the indictional year and an abbreviated version of Frederick’s titles followed, according to the normal practice of Frederick’s chancery, by his regnal years as emperor of Rome, king of Jerusalem, and king of Sicily. In a brief *inscriptio* (line 3), Fallamonacha introduces himself by name and titles. The

latter are attested in the Norman *dīwān*. The style *duana questorum* / *dīwān al-qawāyit(?)*, ‘the bureau of the *questors* / *qāʾids(?)*’, is particularly interesting (lines 3; 15 – where the problem is fully discussed). The Arabic style first appears under King Tancred in 1190, and arguably hints at the existence of a whole tier of subordinate financial administrators, *questors* in Latin and *qāʾids* in Arabic, who are otherwise invisible. If so, it witnesses another coining of an Arabic word (see *disqūmī* above), in this case a variant spelling of the plural of *qāʾid*, not *quwawād* or even *qawāʾid*, but *qawāyit* (or *qawāʾit*) with a final *tāʾ*, perhaps reflecting the mediation of the Greek loanword *káit* (κάϊτ), *káites* (κάϊτες): i.e. *qāʾid* > *káit*, pl. *káites* > *qawāʾit*. All this demonstrates the continuing influence of the trilingual Norman chancery.

The text then moves directly into the detailed *narratio* of the circumstances leading up to the boundary inquest (lines 3–7). The report of the bailiff and judges, including the translation of the boundary description, comes next (lines 7–12). Only the beginning of the report is quoted and immediately the boundaries have finished comes the compact *dispositio-corroboratio* in which Fallamonacha grants Geoffrey’s petition and orders the present document to be made and sealed. Finally, a brief *datum* (line 13) gives the place and date of issue.

The Arabic text is referred to as a *sjill* (lines 15 and 25), an Egyptian term used regularly for the products of the Norman *dīwān*, but rarely attested in the Maghrib or al-Andalus.<sup>15</sup> Following the standard practice of the *dīwān*, the Arabic has no *basmala* (*invocatio*) and opens abruptly with the *narratio* (lines 13–14), introduced by the usual formula *lammā kāna bi-tārīkh . . .* (‘When it was the date of . . .’: line 13). As usual, the dating formulae are incorporated into the *narratio*. As in the Latin, the calendar year is according to the Byzantine reckoning; this was by no means unusual in Arabic documents from the Norman *dīwān*, and it seems likely that in this, at least, the Latin text of our document has followed the lead of the Arabic. The use of numerical digits for the day of the month is rare, but not unprecedented in the Norman *dīwān* (line 13). The Arabic name of the month, *yanār*, is standard. In a startling departure from the trend in the Norman *dīwān*, Frederick’s royal titles are curtailed to the bare minimum (*maḥlā-nā al-imbiraṭūr Fridīrīk*, ‘our lord the emperor Frederick’). Indeed, in the Arabic, although not in the Latin, Fallamonacha’s titles are longer and more impressive than those of his master – we shall return to this below. The list of Frederick’s possessions differs from that in the Latin text, so that he is emperor of Germany (*ʿalā allamāniya*) not Rome, and king of Syria (*ʿalā al-shām*) not Jerusalem, following the model of his official Arabic title (see note to line 14 below).

Next, as in the Latin, Fallamonacha introduces himself in a brief *inscriptio* (line 15), directly followed by the detailed *narratio* (lines 15–19). In the latter, a few stock formulae attest to the author’s familiarity with the formulary of the Norman *dīwān*. The passive participle *al-maʿmūr*, meaning ‘the royal’ (literally ‘flourishing’) is used to qualify the imperial *dīwāns* and the palace in Palermo (lines 15, 16, 20). The passive participle *al-maṣūna* acknowledges that Palermo is protected by God, and takes the place of the longer augural formula (*duʿāʾ*) from the same Arabic root that was

used by the Norman *dīwān*– *ṣāna-hā llāh*, ‘May God preserve it!’ (line 16).

As in the Latin, the conclusion of the officials’ report is omitted from the Arabic, and the *dispositio-corroboratio* follows directly after the boundaries. The Arabic *corroboratio* is somewhat fuller than the Latin: ‘and I have written my *ʿalāma* on it [the document], and impressed it with my seal in confirmation of it and as a proof of its authenticity’. The final phrase was standard in the Norman *dīwān*, and borrowed a common Islamic chancery formula (see notes to line 26). The *datum* is followed immediately by Fallamonacha’s *ʿalāma* (Fig. 4), written with the same pen and ink as the text, and extended (*kashīda*) three-quarters of the way across the page, before it ends with the elaborate isolated form of the letter *hāʾ* that abbreviates the word, ‘it is finished’, another standard practice in the Norman *dīwān*. At the foot of the document is a *plica*, through which the scarlet silk tie that once held the seal is still attached. The seal itself was already detached in 1961, and now appears to be missing. It was a large (63mm) disc of green wax, bearing the image of a seated figure, surrounded by the name ‘Obertus Fallamonacha’, preceded by a cross (Fig. 5).<sup>16</sup>

The external features of the bilingual document indicate that it was produced in a well-organised, professional environment (Fig. 1). The parchment is fine, strong and regular in dimensions and thickness. The skin side was prepared for the text by whitening; the original, very pale, colour of the recto is preserved within the fold of the *plica*. Perforations were pricked through each fore-edge at intervals of 8mm, and horizontal lines ruled in dry point between each pair; each side was ruled with a vertical margin of 10mm. The scribe of the Latin text followed the lines and margins; the Arabic scribe respected the margins, but did not keep his text within the ruled lines and used them, rather, as a rough guide so that his lines are nonetheless evenly spaced. The first two full lines of the Arabic are horizontal for the full width of the folio, but the subsequent lines tend to sink towards the centre and rise towards the left-hand margin, with some vertical ‘stacking’ to finish the line (e.g. lines 17 and 19).

The Latin script is still the Carolingian minuscule used by the Norman chancery, generally compact and rather square, with relatively restrained use of capitals and decorative flourishes. The Arabic script, too, suggests some continuity with the Norman *dīwān*. Most importantly, it exhibits none of the characteristics of Maghribī rounded scripts to be seen in Almohad and Ḥafṣid documents. The pen was apparently trimmed in the Mashriqī fashion, with the nib cut flat and bevelled, as may be seen from the fact that the scribe was easily able to vary the thickness of his line. Neither a formal book hand, nor a casual script written by an untrained hand, this is an informal, unadorned, workaday cursive script, written at some speed by a competent and practised hand. Compared with most of the *dīwānī* scripts used under William II, and in the one bilingual document of Constance, this is plain, simple and unpretentious, and not an elaborate chancery hand with calligraphic flourishes designed to impress. The letters slant distinctly from right to left, a feature not seen in Norman *dīwānī* scripts, which are generally vertical. Both the Latin



Figure 5 The seal of Obertus Fallamonacha from the Latin–Arabic boundary record of 10 January 1242 (after Collura 1961, fig. 15b)

and the Arabic texts appear to use a brown-black ink, presumably based upon gall nut and iron, which has faded with time. The ink used for the Latin appears to be slightly redder, that for the Arabic slightly blacker; different scribes wrote the Latin and Arabic texts. There is a scattering of diacritical points throughout the text, placed for the most part without obvious reason, although Latin loanwords (e.g. *banāfisiyū*: line 16) and personal names (*Albarīk wa-Jīliyū*: line 21) generally have some, but never all, points. *Ihmāl* – the use of signs indicating the absence of diacritical points – is restricted to the occasional gratuitous caron over the letters *rā'* (*ma'mūr*, line 20; *amr*, line 27) and *sīn* (e.g. *Lawrans* and *yumsik*, line 16; *sanad al-dīs*, lines 22–3). The text is unvocalised, except for three cases of *tanwīm-alif* (lines 18 *bis* and 20). The scribe uses a characteristic ligature for *lām-alif* that begins with the tip of the almost horizontal *alif*, which may run on from the preceding letter, forms a large elliptical loop, and ends with the *lām*, standing a little forward of vertical, with a small spur (lines 13, 14, 19, 25, 26).

Although the Arabic script is generally without calligraphic pretension, the opening words *lammā kāna* were written without lifting the pen, and so were those that follow, *bi-tārīkh*. This reproduces, if somewhat unskillfully, a standard flourish in Arabic documents from the Norman *dīwān*. Fallamonacha's *ʿalāma* is written with the same pen and ink as the text, raising the possibility that his own scribe, or possibly even he himself, wrote the Arabic text of our document.

The language of the Arabic text of our document is unprecedented in the products of the Norman *dīwān* in that the entire text, not merely the boundary description but also the translation of the report from Vicari, and Fallamonacha's framing text, reflects the vernacular register of so-called 'Middle Arabic'. All such features are noted in our edition of the document, but one case deserves particular attention because, uniquely, it includes features that are diagnostically characteristic of the dialect of Ifrīqīya

or the wider Maghrib. There are four instances of the use of the imperfect of the verb 'to be' (*yakūn*) in order to signal a change of mood before a second imperfect verb:<sup>17</sup> *li-nakūnū nu'tiyū-hu*, 'that we might set down for him' (line 17); *li-yakūnū yakhtārū*, 'that they might choose' (line 18); *yakūnū yaktubū* (without the introductory particle *li-*), 'who can/might write' (line 18); and *li-yakūnū yaktubū*, 'that they might write' (line 21).<sup>18</sup> Of these, the first is the most extraordinary in that it preserves, both in its elements and in written form, an entirely vernacular Ifrīqī or Maghribī form of the first person plural imperfect, which retains the terminal *yā'* of a defective root (i.e. of a verb with a weak final radical) before the final vowel of the conjugation, a *wāw* pronounced as the long vowel *-ū*, giving *li-nakūnū nu'tiyū-hu*. When written as *لنكونوا نعطيوه* this vernacular form screams out from the page. This particular construction could not exist in Classical Arabic (CA), in which the imperfect subjunctive of the two verbs would, in any case, be respectively *nakūna* and *nu'tiya*. This hyperpluralised feature is repeated with *nu'limū*, 'we inform' (line 19: CA *nu'limu*). Both the use of a hyperpluralised form of the first person plural, and the retention of the defective terminal *yā'* to merge with the final vowel of the conjugation *-ū*, are distinctly Maghribī features well attested in the modern dialects of Tunisia and Morocco.<sup>19</sup> They are also attested in the medieval period.

The anonymous compiler of *Al-Jumāna fī izālat al-raṭāna* ('The pearl for the elimination of gibberish'), which opens a window onto aspects of Maghribī and Andalusian vernacular of the late 14th to early 15th centuries, makes the following indignant protest against the common use in the Islamic West of this hyperpluralised 'we' form:

to the imperfect verb, [already] prefixed by *nūn*, [they add] the suffix *wāw* when they mean more than one, such as when they say: 'we go out' [*nakhrūjū*], and 'we strike' [*nadribū*], and the like; when the correct thing to do is omit that [suffixed *wāw*] and say: 'we strike [*nadribu*] . . . and 'we go out [*nakhrūju*] . . . because this [prefixed] *nūn* already indicates more than one, so that there is no need for the [suffixed] *wāw* [to indicate] the plural.<sup>20</sup>

The presence of such hyperpluralisation in our document proves that it was current before the mid-13th century, and attests to the antiquity of a Maghribī retention of *yā'* in the first person plural of the imperfect of certain defective verbs and, presumably, also in the third person masculine plural.

In our document, the only other instance of first person plural imperfect is rendered as *nu'limu – nahnu Ūbart Fallamūniqa . . . nu'limu man . . .*, literally 'we, Obbert Fallamonacha, inform those who . . .' (line 15). While the *pluralis majestatis* may be intended, as in the equivalent phrase in the Latin text (*Nos Obbertus Fallamonacha . . . facimus . . .*: line 3), the contrast between *nu'limu* here and *nakūnū nu'tiyū* in line 17 may also reflect Maghribī vernacular usage, where the standard form of the first person plural imperfect verb implies that the subject is singular, while the hyperpluralised form indicates that 'we' refers to more than one.<sup>21</sup>

The preceding discussion of various features of our document, and the notes to the edition of the text in the Appendix below, lead to the conclusion that it is an anomalous product. The external features, diplomatic form, language and content of the Arabic text all reveal clear

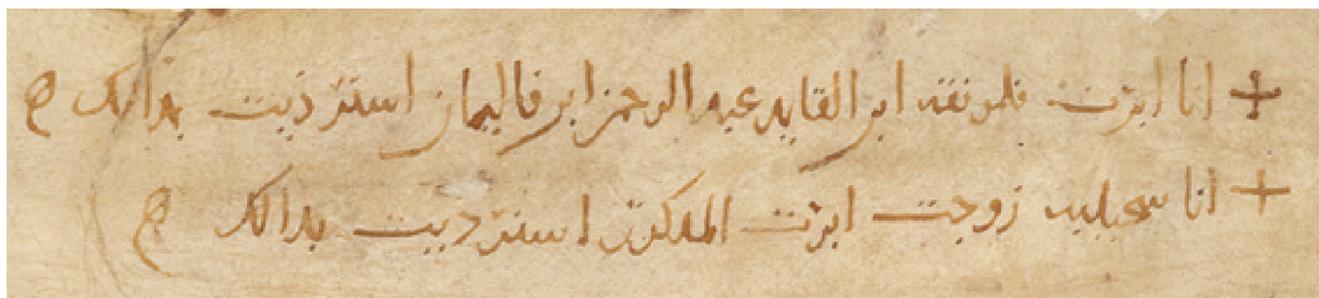


Figure 6 The superscriptions of Obertus Fallamonacha and his wife Suhayliba, April 1238 AD. Detail from Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario di S. Maria della Grotta, no. 13, recto (© Archivio di Stato, Palermo)

traces of its descent from the products of the Norman *dīwān*. At the same time, its uncertain command of particular *dīwānī* forms and practices, its script that is not the Norman *dīwānī* last used in 1198 and, above all, the ubiquitous use of the vernacular register, peppered with diagnostically Ifrīqī or Maghribī features, all show how distant our document is, and how widely it has travelled, from its *dīwānī* origins. This serves to focus our attention upon the official responsible for its issue, Obbertus Fallamonacha.

Fallamonacha's origins are complex and perplexing.<sup>22</sup> He was the son of 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the *qā'id* of Palermo, who died before 1238 (Figs 6–7).<sup>23</sup> 'Abd al-Raḥmān means, literally, 'Servant of the Merciful [God]', and was a name used by Arab Christians in Sicily.<sup>24</sup> Fallamonacha's father is not otherwise known.<sup>25</sup> He was the son of Fālīmān (?), a name probably derived from the Greek personal name Φιλομένης, Philoménuś.<sup>26</sup> If so, then Fallamonacha's ancestors were Arabic-speaking Christians of the Greek rite, and must have been Palermitans since the days of the Norman kings.<sup>27</sup>

Despite his impeccable Palermitan pedigree, Obbertus Fallamonacha was closely connected to Genoa, and his name and surname were both characteristically Genoese. The surname is first attested in 1104 as Futi Monacha; as late as 1166, the first Futi Monacha's daughter still bore her father's surname. But what may seem to be a rather nice distinction between the vulgar Futi Monacha ('screw-a-nun') and the more refined Falla Monacha ('do-the-nun') clearly mattered in Genoa,<sup>28</sup> so that when her son became a councillor of the commune in 1157, it was with the surname Fallamonica.<sup>29</sup> Thereafter, Fallamonica (and variants) is well attested.<sup>30</sup>

Two documents establish beyond all doubt Fallamonacha's connections with Genoa. First, in 1253, Fallamonacha wrote to two of his agents in Genoa listing the various sums that the following Genoese merchants had from him *in accomenda*: Ogerio Falamonica, £170; Origo de Auria, 10 ounces of gold; and Ansaldus Falamonica (no sum is recorded).<sup>31</sup> Second, and still more important, a clause in the treaty between Manfred, regent of Sicily, and Genoa, dated 8 July 1257, guarantees that he will release Fallamonacha and his family, and restore his property to him.<sup>32</sup> Clearly, Fallamonacha was of some importance not just to his Genoese family, but also to the commune as a whole.

When Fallamonacha first appears in April 1238, he is married, with children already above the age of consent;<sup>33</sup> it follows that he is likely to have been born a little before 1200, but not too long before, because he was still active as late as 1274, when he appeared as a witness before an inquiry held

to establish the rights of the Cappella Palatina.<sup>34</sup> Thus, his childhood coincided with the period of political and social chaos that followed the death of William II in 1189. During these difficult years, his father, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, might have been provoked to remove either himself, or his family, from Palermo by any one of a series of crises: the massacre of the Saracens and outbreak of the Muslim revolts in 1189–90, Henry VI's persecution of the remnants of Tancred's administration in December 1194, the war between Markward of Anweiler and Walter of Palear in 1199–1200, or many other trials and tribulations. 'Abd al-Raḥmān could well have had his own reasons for choosing Genoa, but that cosmopolitan city, so well connected to Palermo by commerce and trade, might, in any case, have seemed an attractive place of refuge. As a former leading official from the Sicilian capital, he might easily have found a willing sponsor, either for himself or for his infant son, among the Falamonica, one of the less important families of the Genoese elite. And, had Fallamonacha grown up in Genoa, perhaps even in his sponsor's household, he might well have followed Frederick back to Palermo after 1221, in order not only to pick up his roots, but also to further the interests of his adoptive family. Of course, this is mere unsubstantiated speculation, but does illustrate one possible manner in which Fallamonacha's dual citizenship, both Palermitan and Genoese, could have come about.

In 1220, when Frederick returned to Sicily from Germany, he was no longer willing to grant Genoa the special treatment that the commune had enjoyed since 1200, and that he had little choice but to confirm on his way north in 1212. At Capua, in December 1220, Genoa lost all commercial and trading privileges throughout the kingdom. Despite this setback, Genoese merchants continued to trade in Sicily throughout the 1220s. Only in the 1230s did Genoese trade in Sicily significantly decline. In 1238 the Genoese first refused to renew their fealty to Frederick, and then allied with the Pope and Venice against the empire.<sup>35</sup> In Genoa two factions emerged, one anti- and the other pro-imperial. Families belonging to the former continued to dominate the government and administration, while pro-imperial families were excluded from high office. A few individuals, such as Nicola Spinola and, later, Ansaldo da Mari,<sup>36</sup> chose to enter Frederick's service, and, until Fallamonacha's Palermitan pedigree was fully understood, he was often assumed to have been among those pro-imperial Genoese who had defected to Sicily after 1238.<sup>37</sup> But in April of that year, Fallamonacha and his family were well established in Palermo and had begun to accumulate

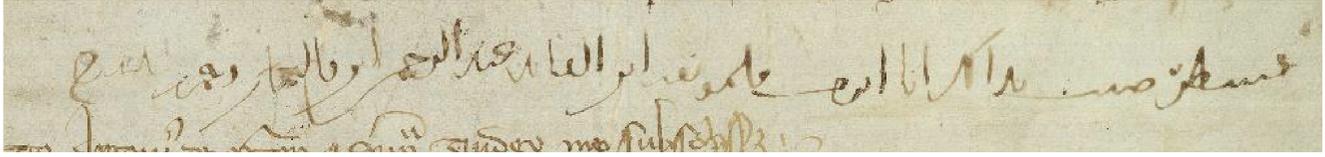


Figure 7 The signature of Obertus Fallamonacha, 20 September 1266. Detail from Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario della Martorana, no. 33, recto (© Archivio di Stato, Palermo)

property; clearly they had not stepped fresh off the boat from Genoa. What is more, he does not seem to have been over eager to assist his Genoese compatriots: in December 1239 Frederick II had to remind Fallamonacha in writing to carry out his order to supply wheat to the Genoese merchants Enrico de Nigro and Ansaldo da Mari.<sup>38</sup>

There is no space here to follow Fallamonacha's administrative and political career in Sicily in any detail.<sup>39</sup> In any case, the sources provide such detail only for a few months in 1239–40, and are randomly episodic, when not silent, about the last five of his seven years in office.<sup>40</sup> The main landmarks of his career can be quickly summarised. At this time, the administration of the island of Sicily was shared between two *secreti*, one in Palermo and the other in Messina, whose competencies divided along a line from Pollina on the north coast to Licata on the south, following the course of the River Salso (or Imera meridionale).<sup>41</sup> Shortly before 13 October 1239, Fallamonacha was promoted from 'master portulan of Sicily west of the River Salso' to *secretus* of Palermo.<sup>42</sup> His activities, particularly in 1239–40, suggest that, as *secretus*, he was expected to be omniscient, much like the 'palace Saracens' of the Norman kings, but that his fundamental duty was the financial administration of the royal demesne, feudal lands and the *iura regalia*, comprising all other customs, rights and taxes claimed by the crown.<sup>43</sup> Importantly for what follows, the *secretus* was the supervisor of the *qā'id* of Palermo (*gaytus Panormi*) and, by extension, of the other *qā'ids* of the financial administration.<sup>44</sup>

On 3 May 1240, Frederick united the duties previously performed by the two *secreti* into one office, and made Fallamonacha *secretus* for the whole island:

In order that the administration of the officers of our realm should not be confused through lack of clarity about their duties, obstructing the interests of our fisc, and even causing harm to our faithful subjects, after deep consideration, Our Majesty has decreed that there should be one sole *secretus* for all Sicily from the Strait of Messina, who shall administer with the greatest care all the rights of our *curia*, diligently carry out all our commands, and administer justice to our faithful subjects according to his competency. Moreover, confident in the prudence and loyalty of our faithful Obbertus Fallamonacha, we have nominated him master of the bureaux of the *secreti* and of the *questores* for all Sicily from the Strait of Messina, so that henceforward he shall faithfully perform that office and everything involved in it.<sup>45</sup>

In our document, this office appears as *imperialis doane de secretis et questorum magister per totam Siciliam* / *ṣāhib al-dawāwīn al-ma'mūra wa-l-qawāyit(?) bi-jamī' ṣiqillīya* (lines 3; 15). While the office of *magister duana de secretis* / *ṣāhib dūwān al-ma'mūr* may be traced back to the 1140s,<sup>46</sup> the *dūwān al-qawāyit(?)* first appears in September 1190.<sup>47</sup> Fallamonacha held office until at least August 1245.<sup>48</sup> Fallamonacha was perhaps not the

first to hold this office with responsibility for the whole island – John de Romania, who was based at Messina, appears with the same Latin title (*imperialis doane de secretis et questorum magister*) in 1229, and signs simply 'the *secretus* of Sicily'<sup>49</sup> – but, when he left office, he was apparently replaced by two master chamberlains, each with responsibility for half the island.<sup>50</sup>

The clause regarding Fallamonacha in Manfred's treaty with Genoa of 1257 reveals that he and his family had been imprisoned, and their possessions seized, apparently on suspicion of peculation:

We shall also set free Ubertus Falamonaca and all his family, restoring to them their houses and possessions, his two sons having been given to us as hostages until he shall deposit a reckoning (*ratio*) of the offices that he exercised, of which he did not deposit any reckoning, nor give a satisfactory final account (*apodisia*).<sup>51</sup>

Fallamonacha himself had carried out a similar audit of the accounts of Raymond, a predecessor as *secretus Panormi*. On that occasion, Frederick wrote to the castellan of Palermo instructing him to make available to Fallamonacha 'the account books, reckoning, and other written records of the former *secretus*, Raymond';<sup>52</sup> Fallamonacha was to make copies and return them to the castellan, to compile lists of sums owed by and to Raymond, and to forward everything to the emperor.<sup>53</sup> Fallamonacha's accounts of his far more extensive administration would seem to have been less accessible to the imperial administration than those of Raymond.

Among his other duties, Fallamonacha also served as Frederick's ambassador to Islamic courts: in 1240 to the Ḥafṣid sultan in Tunis,<sup>54</sup> possibly to Morocco in 1241,<sup>55</sup> and in 1244 to an unnamed ruler in 'Spanish parts', possibly Muḥammad I, the first Naṣrid ruler of Granada.<sup>56</sup> On each occasion, Fallamonacha would have seen an Arabic administration at work, and it is tempting to assume that, like George of Antioch who having gone 'many times' to the Fāṭimid court in Cairo thence brought back to Sicily the scribes who reformed King Roger's *dūwān*, Fallamonacha returned with one or more professional scribes. While this remains possible, we have already seen that our document exhibits no feature that reveals the hand of a Maghribī, still less an Andalusī, scribe; its script, diplomatic format and formulary all confirm that its antecedents lay in the Norman chancery.

Fallamonacha also accumulated property. Already in 1238 he held at least three small estates in Palermo.<sup>57</sup> On 13 September 1244 he purchased from Archbishop Berardo the large estate of Barca, which lay along the shore to the north of Palermo, between the city and Monte Pellegrino.<sup>58</sup> Outside of the city, two *contrade* still bear what appears to be his name.

One lay at modern Contrada Fellamonica, on the right bank of the River Iato, where the stream turns from west to north, about 5km west of S. Giuseppe Iato, to the east of the southern end of modern Lago Poma (**Fig. 3**).<sup>59</sup> In the 16th century ‘Fallamonicha’ extended over more than 900ha (418 *salme*), and was so well watered that an attempt was made to grow rice. This land had been part of the royal demesne until William II granted it to Monreale, as part of his vast donation to the abbey. In the boundary register of 1182 the area lies firmly within the Monreale lands, in the south of Raḥl Ibn Barka, with Raḥl Laqamūqa to the west and Jaḥīna to the east.<sup>60</sup> How and when these lands took the name Fellamonica is unknown, but it is intriguing to find our Fallamonacha in 1239 both taking the vacant see of Monreale into administration, and recovering land for the royal demesne that had been given away by Archbishop Caro (d. 1233?).<sup>61</sup>

The other *contrada* to bear the name Fellamonica lies about 4km east-north-east of modern Campofelice di Fitalia (**Fig. 3**).<sup>62</sup> During the mid-1230s or thereabouts, Fitalia, and two other *casalia* in the district of Vicari, were administered by our Fallamonacha on behalf of his grandson, Obertino de Calvelli.<sup>63</sup> All three seem to have lain on the western side of the valley of the Azziriolo, between modern Mezzoiuso and Campofelice and Vicari, 5km to 10km as the crow flies from the Hospital of St Laurence.<sup>64</sup> In other words, the estate whose boundaries Fallamonacha ordered to be defined and recorded for the cleric Geoffrey in 1242 was a close neighbour of, even if it did not actually adjoin, the lands he administered on behalf of his grandson Obertino.

In conclusion, the external features of our document, its formulary and its content all reveal that it was profoundly influenced by the traditions of the Norman *dīwān*, even though more than 40 years separate it from the last surviving Arabic document issued by Constance in 1198. And yet, there does not seem to have been an Arabic chancery in Palermo during this long interval. In December 1239, when the emperor needed a slave to be taught to read and write Arabic, he sent him to the colony of Muslims transported from Sicily to Apulia at Lucera, not to Palermo.<sup>65</sup> Although our document demonstrates that the administration in Palermo could issue an Arabic document, it apparently preferred not to do so, as is suggested by a Latin charter of September 1244. Thomas, the prior of St Mary’s in Ustica, held on behalf of his church from the imperial demesne four shops in Palermo for which he had owed 24 gold *tarì* annually as recorded ‘in the account books of the bureau of the shops’ (*in quaterniones doane apothecarum*). After a reassessment, the rent had been increased to 32 *tarì*. Prior Thomas complained that he was unable to pay so much, and consequently he and his church were granted exemption in perpetuity. The charter recording that exemption was written in Latin – *scriptum doane in Latino*, says the text, stressing the point that it was not written in Arabic – by Mathew Grillus, a public notary specially recruited by Fallamonacha, because the scribes of the *dīwān* were too busy to write it themselves.<sup>66</sup> This suggests that the financial *dīwāns* kept their internal records in Arabic, were overworked or understaffed or both, and had sometimes to make special arrangements when they needed to issue a document in Latin.

As we have seen, in 1229 it was claimed that ‘the registers (*quaterni*) of the imperial *duana de secretis*’ listed ‘the boundaries of every city, castle, *terra* and *casale* in Sicily’. As late as 1182, these registers (*dafātīr*, Latin *deptarii*) were kept in Arabic, at least for the lands of the royal demesne that were granted to the abbey of Monreale. The inhabitants of those lands, which had been the heart of the Muslim reservation of western Sicily, were predominantly Arabic-speaking Muslims.<sup>67</sup> It is likely, although it has not yet been proven, that the Norman *dīwān* also kept registers of boundaries in Greek and Latin for those lands whose inhabitants were Greek- or Latin-speakers. The boundary description in our document was composed in Arabic, presumably upon the testimony of local, Arabic-speaking jurors, and would have been entered into the *dafātīr*. All this follows the practice standard since the 1140s. But what is remarkable is that the record issued to Geoffrey was bilingual, in Latin and Arabic, after an interval of more than 40 years from which there survives no Arabic or bilingual document produced by the *dīwān*.

The Arabic used to record boundary descriptions, which were composed in the field by local officials on the testimony of jurors personally familiar with the boundaries, often preserves traces of the rustic vernacular spoken by the witnesses, even when inserted into the polished documents issued by the royal *dīwān*. But the whole of the Arabic text of our document, not just the boundary description, reflects the vernacular register of ‘Middle Arabic’ and includes features that are characteristic of Ifrīqī or Maghribī dialect. This awkward and distinctly *baladī* Arabic, both native and uncivilised, is clearly not the product of a routine, well-practised procedure, and indicates that our document cannot be the sole survivor of a putative series of official Arabic or bilingual boundary records from the first 40 years of Frederick’s reign that have since disappeared without trace.

Why, then, did Fallamonacha order this unique document to be made? There is nothing about the recipient, Geoffrey the son of Michael, a citizen of Palermo, and a priest in the Cappella Palatina, that would seem to indicate that he required a bilingual record. As to the donor, while Fallamonacha did administer neighbouring lands on behalf of his nephew, and so may have had a particular interest in the boundaries of the Hospital of St Laurence, this does not explain why he should have chosen to issue a bilingual boundary record to Geoffrey. The explanation, therefore, seems to lie within the *dīwān*.

This may be the first time that Fallamonacha was requested to order a boundary inquest since he assumed the direction of the *duana de secretis* in May 1239. The manner in which the external features and formulary of the Arabic text of our document constantly hark back to the boundary records of the Norman *dīwān* not only demonstrates how keenly Fallamonacha was aware of that tradition, but also suggests that he may have been attempting to revive it. The resources available to him were strictly limited. His administration, as the document of 1244 shows, was overworked and understaffed. Although internal records continued to be kept in Arabic, there was no living tradition of issuing Arabic documents to external recipients. Fallamonacha clearly had no professional secretaries trained

in the composition of official documents, and had to rely upon a poorly educated scribe whose grasp of the written language was far from perfect. And so it is not surprising that there is no evidence that this unique experiment was ever repeated.

If Fallamonacha was indeed attempting to revive the *dīwān*, was he acting upon his own initiative or with the approval, even at the suggestion, of the emperor? After his return from Germany in 1220, Frederick had visited Palermo for brief stays only six times in the 1220s, and on one final occasion in 1233; he had left Sicily for the last time in 1234, and was to return only as a corpse for burial in the cathedral. It is unlikely that, in 1242, he would have been up to date with the internal business of the *dīwāns* in his palace in Palermo. Since October 1239, his policy towards the remaining Muslims of Sicily seems to have been to encourage them to leave their rural *casalia*, which lay dangerously close to the hilltop refuges that had been occupied by the Muslim rebels until 1223, and to concentrate in the Seralcadi, the Muslim quarter of Palermo.<sup>68</sup> Thence, it would seem, they were to be transported to the Muslim colony at Lucera in Apulia.<sup>69</sup> There would have been little point, in 1242, in encouraging Fallamonacha's experiment to revive the practice of issuing documents in Arabic if the decision had already been taken, in 1239, to transport the last Muslims of Sicily to Apulia. In short, if Fallamonacha really was attempting to revive the Arabic chancery, then it seems unlikely that he did do so at Frederick's command, or even with his encouragement. This is confirmed by the document itself: it was issued by Fallamonacha, and not even in the name of Frederick; Frederick's reign as king of Sicily is miscalculated; and Fallamonacha's titles are longer and more impressive than those of the emperor, which are reduced to a bare minimum.

In the event, Fallamonacha's experiment came to nothing, and our document was the swansong of the multilingual chancery. In 1243 the Muslims returned to rebellion and reoccupied the mountain refuges of Iato and Entella, and three years later the last of the Muslim rebels were expelled to Lucera.<sup>70</sup> In 1245 Fallamonacha himself lost office, apparently accused of peculation. He was replaced in Palermo by the master chamberlain Philip of Catania,<sup>71</sup> and neither he, nor any of his successors, can be shown to have exhibited the slightest interest in reviving the multilingual Norman chancery.

## Appendix

Latin–Arabic record of an inquest to determine the boundaries of the estate of the hospital of the church of St Laurence, Cefalà [Diana], in the district of Vicari, 10 January 6750 AM [AD 1242], Indiction 15, Palermo.

Obbertus Fallamonacha, master of the imperial *duana de secretis* and master of the *questors* for all Sicily, accedes to the petition of Geoffrey, son of Michael, a citizen of Palermo and a cleric in the imperial chapel in Palermo, that he be issued with a written description of the boundaries of the lands of the hospital of the church of St Laurence, which he holds as a benefice from the church of Agrigento, in the territory of Cefalà [Diana], in the administrative district of Vicari. Fallamonacha writes to the bailiff and judges of Vicari, ordering them to select jurors from

among the worthy elders of Vicari, to swear them in, and to produce a written record of the boundaries. The officials do as commanded, and report to Fallamonacha under seal, listing the names of four jurors – the judges Albericus and Gilius, William the one-time viscount of Vicari, and Basil the son of Honorius – and enclosing the boundary description. Having considered the report from Vicari, Fallamonacha ordered this document (*scriptum*; *sijill*) to be drawn up, signed with his personal Arabic signature (*alāma*), sealed with his seal and issued to Geoffrey.

*Original*: Agrigento, Archivio storico del Capitolo della Cattedrale, Tabulario no. 21.

*Editions*: Pirri 1733, I, 764b, Latin text only. Picone 1866, *Documenti*, CXL–CXLIII, Latin text and Michele Amari's translation of the Arabic. Cusa 1982, no. 190, 602–5. Collura 1961, no. 63, 120–6, plates VIII and XVa, Latin text, and Arabic text edited by Umberto Rizzitano, with Amari's translation after Picone 1866.

*Registers*: Huillard-Bréholles 1852–61, 6/1, 20. Cusa 1982, no. 190, 743–4. RI, V, 2, 4, no. 13402, in: *Regesta Imperii Online*, [http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1242-01-10\\_1\\_0\\_5\\_2\\_4\\_3420\\_13402](http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1242-01-10_1_0_5_2_4_3420_13402) (accessed 9 August 2017).

*Support*: parchment, both sides originally whitened, but the recto has now darkened with age (inside the *plica*, the recto is still pale). Maximum dimensions: 392mm + *plica* 53mm = 445mm x 334mm. Margin of approx. 10mm ruled on both sides. Both left and right pricked and ruled with dry point to give lines of 8mm, which only the Latin scribe respects.

*Seal*: Now apparently missing, only the red silk tie remains, attached through four holes and a slot cut through the *plica*. Collura (1961, 120: see also n. 16 above) describes the 'sigillo pendente da filo serico rosso, oggi conservato a parte. Si tratta di un bellissimo sigillo *maiestatis*, di cera verde, del diametro di mm. 63, incassato in una teca lignea del diametro mm. 75. Al centro, su di un sfondo delimitato da un triangolo equilatero (lato mm. 20), sta una figura seduta, reggente – pare – un globo (Federico?); attorno vi è disposta la leggenda: + OBERTUS FALLAMONACHA (cf. tav. XVa = **Fig. 5** above)'. See also n. 16 above.

*Notes*: On the reverse of the *plica*: to the left of the tie, in 14th-century chancery hand .XXI. *ianuar(ii) presentatum*; to the right of the tie, Fallamonacha's 'alāma is transcribed with a modern steel-nib pen, by a rather shaky, 19th-century(?) hand, with full vocalisation and points كُتِبَ عَنْ أَمْرِنَا. On the verso: 14th century(?) *Pri(vilegium?) co(n)finiu(m?) s(an)c(t)i Lau(r) encii Chiphale*; an illegible 14th-century(?) note; 16th century(?) *De finib(us) hospitalis s(an)ct)i Laure(n-) / cii, in tentimento Cefala, beneficiu(m) / ecc(lesie) Ag(ri)g(ent)ine*; 17th century(?) *Descriptio confini(um) hospitalis / sancti Laurentii de tenimento / Chifale de b(e) n(e)fficio ecc(lesie) Agri(gentine)*; 19th century *copiato*; 20th century, red crayon, within a circle, 21; 20th century, pencil, 1242–43.

In no(m)i(n)e d(omi)ni n(ost)ri Ih(es)u Ch(ri)st(i) am(en). Anno a creatio(n)e mundi Sexmillesimo, Septingentesimo, Quinq(ua) gesimo, Decimo mensis Ianuarii, q(ui)ntedecime Indictio(n)is, Imp(er)ii d(omi)ni n(ost)ri Friderici, Dei gr(ati)a /<sup>2</sup> Invictissimi Romanor(um) Imp(er)atoris semp(er) augusti, Illustris Ier(usa) l(e)m, (et) Sicilie Regis, Anno vicesimo s(e)c(un)d(o), Regni Ier(usa)l(e)m anno septimodecimo, Regni vero Sicilie anno quadrages(im)o /<sup>3</sup> q(ui)nto, felicit(er) am(en). Nos Obb(er)tus Fallamo(n)acha, Imperial(is) doane de sec(r)etis et q(ue)sto(rum) mag(iste)r p(er) totam Siciliam, p(er) p(re)sens sc(ri)ptu(m)

notu(m) facim(us) universis tam p(re)sentib(us) q(uam) futuris,  
q(uod) Goffredus not(ar)ri Michael(is), /<sup>4</sup> civis Panormi,  
Imperialis Capp(e)lle Panormi cl(er)icus, ad Imp(er)ialem  
doanam accedens, supplicavit nob(is) ut, q(ui)a certos t(er)minos  
finiu(m) tenim(en)ti Hospital(is) Eccl(esi)e sue S(an)c(ti)  
Laurentii site in tenim(en)to Chiphale q(uam) /<sup>5</sup> tenet (et)  
possidet in b(e)n(e)ficium ab Eccl(esi)a Agrigentina, ignorat, ex  
officio n(ost)ro p(re)cip(er)em(us) assignari s(ib)i fines ip(s)os p(er)  
antiq(u)os (et) fide dignos ho(m)i(n)es regio(n)is p(ro)xime  
tenim(en)to eccl(esi)e sup(ra)d(i)c(t)e. Nos aut(em) inclinati iuste  
peti- /<sup>6</sup> cioni sue, sc(ri)psimus baiul(o) et iudicibus Biccari q(ui)  
sup(er) finib(us) tenim(en)ti p(re)d(i)c(t)e eccl(esi)e p(er) p(ro)bos  
et antiquos (et) fidedignos ho(m)i(n)es ip(s)us t(er)re Biccari  
recepto p(ri)us ab illo(rum) sing(u)lis iuram(en)to, inq(ui)sitio(n)  
em facere(n)t diligente(m), (et) ea q(ue) p(er) /<sup>7</sup> inq(ui)sicio(n)em  
de ip(s)is finib(us) inve(n)irent, nob(is) sub sigillo eo(rum) suis  
litt(er)is nuntiare(n)t. Qui Baiulus (et) Iudices resc(ri)pseru(n)t  
nob(is) in hac forma: Nobili viro eo(rum) d(omi)no (et) b(e)n(e)  
f(a)c(t)ori d(omin)o Obb(er)to Fallamo(n)ach(a), Imp(er)ial(i)  
doane de /<sup>8</sup> secretis (et) questo(rum) mag(ist)ro p(er) totam  
Sicil(i)am, Baiuli (et) Iudices Biccari, (et) c(etera). Lict(er)as v(est)  
re d(omi)natio(n)is nob(is) t(ra)nsmissas recepim(us) (et) statim  
studuim(us) adimplere mandatu(m) v(est)r(u)m (et) fecim(us)  
iurare de p(ro)bis (et) antiq(ui)s ho(min)ib(us) Bic- /<sup>9</sup> cari, ad  
scribendu(m) fines Hospital(is) S(an)c(ti) Laurentii in tenim(en)to  
Chifale, (et) sunt hii: Alberic(us), et Gilius iudices, Guill(elm)us  
q(uo)ndam vicecomes Biccari, (et) Basili(us) de Honorio, q(ui)  
iuraver(un)t (et) sc(ri)pser(un)t fines p(re)d(i)c(t)i ho- /<sup>10</sup> spital(is)  
sic: incipientes a vallone q(ui) dicit(ur) Co(n)qui, et vadit p(er)  
medietate(m) montis Chip(er)ii, (et) descendit p(er) sindis usq(ue)  
ad nem(us) quod dicit(ur) Farrase, (et) deinde descendit p(er)  
balatas usque ad vallonem S(an)c(ti) Bran- /<sup>11</sup> cati, (et) vadit ad  
viam antiqua(m) q(ue) ducit ad Guduranu(m), (et) ascendit p(er)  
viam viam, ad viam publicam, q(ue) ducit de Biccario ad  
Panormu(m), (et) ascendit exinde usq(ue) ad fines vinee Chichi,  
(et) deinde vadit /<sup>12</sup> ad montana(m) p(re)d(i)c(t)i Chip(er)ii, (et) ita  
concludunt(ur) fines hospital(is) p(re)d(i)c(t)i. Viso itaq(ue) (et)  
intellecto, tenore p(re)sc(ri)pte inq(ui)sitio(n)is (et) certificati p(er)  
eam de finib(us) sup(ra)d(i)c(t)is, ad peticio(n)em ipsi(us)  
Goffredi cl(er)ici p(re)sens sc(ri)ptu(m) inde sibi /<sup>13</sup> fieri fecim(us)  
sigillo n(ost)ro munitum. Scriptum Panormi, vicesimo d(i)c(t)i  
mensis Ianuarii p(re)d(i)c(t)e Quintedecime Indictionis.

لما كان بتاريخ ١٠ من شهر يناير الحول الخامس عشر سنة سنة ١٤١٤ وسبعماية  
وخمسين من تاريخ العالم ومن حكم مولانا الانبر طور فرديك على اللمانية اثنتين  
وعشرين سنة ومن ملكه على الشام سبعة عشر سنة ومن ملكه على صقلية خمسة  
واربعين سنة /<sup>15</sup> نحن اويرت فلمونقة صاحب الدواوين المعمورة والقوايت (٩) بجميع  
صقلية نعلم من حضر ووقف على هذا السجل ان جفرا ابن الكاتب ميخال برجيسي  
المدينة اكرلك الجبلية المقدسة /<sup>16</sup> بالقصر المعمور بالمدينة المصونة حضر بالديوان  
المعمور وسالنا لاجل انه ما كان يعرف حدود اسبطل صنت لورنس في فحص  
جفلة الذي بمسك واعطاله عن بنافتسيوا /<sup>17</sup> من كنيسية كركنت لكونوا نعطيوه  
الحدود المذكورة عن علم ناس امنا واشياخ بالاقليم المجاور الى الاقليم المذكور من  
الاسبطل المذكور ونحن لما نظرنا ان طلبه صواب /<sup>18</sup> قبلنا سوله وانفدنا كتابنا الى  
العمال واليودجين ببيقو ليكونوا يختاروا ناسا جيادا واشياخ من البلد المذكورة بعد  
يمينهم بالانجيل المقدس يكونوا يكتبوا لنا /<sup>19</sup> الحدود المنسوبة الى الاسبطل المذكور  
وقد عرفونا بكتابهم المختوم بطابعهم الذي كتبوا العمال واليودجين وهذا مضمونه  
نعلموا حضر تك المصونة المولى سير اويرت /<sup>20</sup> فلمونقة صاحب الدواوين المعمورة  
والقوايت (٩) بجميع صقلية نحن العمال واليودجين ببيقو وصلنا كتابكم الشريف وفي  
الوقت امتلنا الامر واخترنا ناسا جيادا واشياخ /<sup>21</sup> من البلد وحلفناهم بالانجيل المقدس  
ليكونوا يكتبوا حدود اسبطل صنت لورنس المذكور بفحص جفلة وهم البيريك وجيليو  
اليودجين وغيلالم الكاين دسقومى ببيقو /<sup>22</sup> وباسيلي دانريو الذي حلفوا وكتبوا الحدود  
المذكورة فابتدوا بالكتابة من الخندق الذي يعرف بالاحواض ويمور على نصف جبل  
جباري وينزل مع سند /<sup>23</sup> النيس حتى الى الشعرا التي يوقال لها فراشة ومن هناك  
ينزل مع البلاط حتى الى خندق صنت ابرانقاو ويمور الى الطريق القديمة الموصلة  
منه /<sup>24</sup> الى الغدران ويطلع مع الطريق الطريق الى الطريق المسلوكة الموصلة من  
بيقو الى المدينة المصونة ويطلع من هناك الى حدود جنان جيجي ومن هناك يصل الى

جبل جباري /<sup>25</sup> المذكور وهذه حدود الاسبطل المذكور وغاية منتهيها وعندما صح  
لنا كتابهم المختوم بطابعهم امرنا بكتبت هذا السجل للحدود المذكورة الى جفرا /<sup>26</sup>  
الاكرلك المذكور وكتبنا فيه علامتنا وختمناه بطابعنا تأكيدا له ودليلا على صحته وكان  
ذلك بتاريخ العشرين يناير الحول المورخ هـ /<sup>27</sup> كتب عن امرنا هـ

[Latin] /<sup>1</sup> In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. In the  
year of the creation of the world six-thousand-seven-hundred-  
and-fifty, on the tenth of the month of January, in the fifteenth  
indiction, in the twenty-second year of the auspicious empire of  
our Lord Frederick, through the grace of God, /<sup>2</sup> the invincible  
and forever august emperor of the Romans, illustrious king of  
Jerusalem and Sicily, in the seventeenth year of the kingdom of  
Jerusalem [and.] indeed, the forty- /<sup>3</sup> fifth year of the kingdom  
of Sicily. Amen. Obbertus Fallamonacha, master of the whole of  
the imperial *duana de secretis* and of the quaestors for the whole of  
Sicily, by the present charter (*scriptum*) give notice to all those  
present and yet to come, that Godfrey, son the the notary  
Michael, /<sup>4</sup> a citizen of Palermo, a cleric of the imperial chapel  
in Palermo, coming to the imperial *duana*, did implore us that,  
because he was ignorant of certain borders of the boundary of  
the holding of his church of the Hospital of St Laurence, sited in  
the territory of Cefalà, /<sup>5</sup> which he holds and possesses as a  
benefice from the Agrigentan church, we should command  
from our office to mark out to him those same boundaries by  
ancient and trustworthy men from the region near to the estate  
of the aforesaid church. And so, we, favourably inclined  
towards his reasonable petition, /<sup>6</sup> wrote to the bailiff and  
justices of Vicari, who held a careful inquest into the  
boundaries of the holding of the aforesaid church among  
honest, elderly and trustworthy men of the same district of  
Vicari, having first received an oath from each of them, and  
that which they discovered by /<sup>7</sup> the inquest about the same  
boundaries, they reported to us in writing and under seal. The  
bailiff and the justices wrote to us in this manner: 'To the noble  
lord and benefactor, Lord Obbert Fallamonacha, master of the  
imperial *duana de /<sup>8</sup> secretis* and the quaestors for the whole of  
Sicily, from the bailiff and justices of Vicari, *et cetera*. We  
received the letters sent by your lordship to us and immediately  
took pains to fulfil your command. We swore in honest and  
elderly men from Vicari /<sup>9</sup> to write down the boundaries of the  
Hospital of St Laurence in the territory of Cefalà, and they are:  
the justices Alberic and Giles, William the former viscount of  
Vicari, and Basil [the son] of Honorius, who swore and wrote  
down the boundaries of the aforesaid /<sup>10</sup> Hospital, thus:  
'Beginning from the valley that is called Conqui, it goes  
through the middle of Mount Chiperi, and descends through  
the *sindis* until the wood that is called Farrase. Then goes down  
through the rock-outcrops, to the valley of San Brancato. /<sup>11</sup> It  
goes to the old road that leads to Godrano, and climbs straight  
along the road to the public highway that leads from Vicari to  
Palermo, and it goes up from there to the boundary of the  
Vineyard of Chichi. And then it goes /<sup>12</sup> to the aforesaid Mount  
Chiperi, and there end the boundaries of the aforesaid  
Hospital.' Having seen and understood the tenor of the  
aforesaid inquest, and having established by means of it the  
aforesaid boundaries, on the petition of the same clerk Godfrey  
[we ordered] the present document to be made for him and  
furnished with our seal. /<sup>13</sup> Written in Palermo, on the twentieth  
of the month of January, in the aforesaid fifteenth indiction.  
[Arabic] When it was the date of the 10th of the month of  
January in the fifteenth indiction of the year six thousand- /<sup>14</sup>  
and-seven-hundred-and-fifty from the date of the [creation of  
the] world, and of the twenty-second year of the dominion of  
our lord the emperor Frederick over Germany, and of the  
seventeenth year of his reign over Syria, and of the forty-fifth  
year of his reign over Sicily, /<sup>15</sup> I, Ūbart Fallamūnaqa, master of  
the royal *dīwāns* and of the *qā'ids*(?) of all Sicily, inform whoever

will be present and will read this document that Geoffrey, son of the scribe Michael, a burgher of the capital, a cleric of the holy chapel /<sup>16</sup> in the royal palace of the [God-]protected capital, presented himself at the royal *dīwān* and, because he did not know the boundaries of the Hospital of St Laurence in the territory of Cefalà, which he holds and which was granted to him as a benefice /<sup>17</sup> by the church of Agrigento, he asked us to set down for him the aforesaid boundaries, according to the knowledge of the trustworthy men and elders of the district adjacent to the aforesaid territory of the aforesaid Hospital. And, when we saw that his petition was just, /<sup>18</sup> we acceded to his request and dispatched our writ (*kitāb*) to the governor and judges of Vicari, that they should select good men and elders from the aforesaid town who, after swearing on the Holy Gospel, should write out for us /<sup>19</sup> the boundaries pertaining to the aforesaid Hospital. And they apprised us by their letter (*kitāb*), impressed with their seal, of that which the governor and judges recorded; and this is its purport. ‘We, the governor and judges of Vicari, inform your [God-]protected worship, the Lord Sir Ūbart /<sup>20</sup> Fallamūnaqa, master of the royal *dīwāns* and the *qā’ids*(?) of all Sicily, that your noble letter reached us, and we immediately complied with your order and selected good men and elders /<sup>21</sup> from the town and had them swear on the Holy Gospel that they would record the boundaries of the aforesaid Hospital of St Laurence in the territory of Cefalà. They are: Alberic and Giles, the judges; William, being viscount of Vicari; /<sup>22</sup> and Basil [the son] of Honorius. They swore [accordingly] and recorded the aforesaid boundaries. They began to record from the valley known as *al-Aḥwād* (‘the basins’), and it runs through the middle of *Jabal Ḥ. bārī*, and descends with *Sanad* /<sup>23</sup> *al-Dīs* (‘the acclivity of dis’) as far as the thicket which is called *Farāsha*. And from here it descends with the rock outcrop until it reaches the valley of San Brancato. And it passes on to the old road leading to *al-Ghudrān*. It climbs straight along the road to the highroad leading from Vicari to the [God-]protected capital. And it climbs from here to the boundary of the vineyard of *Ḥ. ḥ. ḥ. ḥ.*, and from here it reaches the aforesaid *Jabal Ḥ. bārī*. /<sup>25</sup> And these are the boundaries of the aforesaid hospital, and its full extent.’ And once I was convinced of the veracity of their written record (*kitāb*), impressed with their seal, I ordered this document (*siḥill*) of the aforesaid boundaries to be drawn up for the aforesaid Godfrey /<sup>26</sup> the Clerk, and I have written in it my ‘*alāma* and impressed it with my seal in confirmation and as a proof of its authenticity. And that was on the date of the twentieth of January of the above-dated indiction. /<sup>27</sup> Written on my order.

## Notes to text

Latin

Line 1

- *Anno a creatione mundi sexmillesimo, septingentesimo, quinquagesimo, decimo*: That the only year given is from the creation of the world according to the Byzantine reckoning is extremely unusual in a Latin chancery document, although another Latin document issued by Fallamonacha in September 1244 is dated both *anno a creatione mundi* and *anno ab incarnatione domini*: Winkelmann 1880, 1, no. 707, 561–2.

Lines 2–3

- *Regni vero Sicilie anno quadregesimo q(ui)nto*: Frederick was crowned king of Sicily in Palermo on 17 May 1198, so that January 6750 AM (AD 1242) fell during the 44th year of Frederick’s reign. The error is translated into Arabic (line 14).

Line 3

- *Nos Obbertus Fallamonacha, Imperialis doane de secretis et questorum magister per totam Siciliam*: for Fallamonacha’s name and offices, see note to line 15 below.

Lines 3–4

- *Goffredus notariū Michaelis, / civis Panormi, Imperialis Cappelle Panormi clericus*: see above, p. 143 and n. 3.

Line 4

- *Tenimentum Hospitalis Ecclesie . . . Sancti Laurentii site in tenimento Chiphale*: the Hospital of St Laurence (**Fig. 3**) lay a kilometre or so to the south-west of modern Villafrati, at or near the late 18th-century church of Santa Maria in San Lorenzo (37.900857, 13.479915): see above, p. 143 and n. 4. In the 12th century the castle and settlement of *Chiphale* / *Ḥ. fala* was located on modern Monte or Pizzo Chiarastella (37.924, 13.483); the place name *Ḥ. fala* derives from Greek Κεφαλός, perhaps referring to the skull-like profile on Monte Chiarastella (*pace* Bagnera and Nef 2007, 306, and Bagnera and Nef 2018, 20–5): see Maurici 2016, 311–13 and works there cited.

Line 6

- *Biccarī*: Arabic *Bīqū*, modern Vicari: see also lines 8, 9, 11; 18, 20, 21, 24. For medieval Vicari, see Maurici 1998, 106; Zorić 2001.

Line 9

- *Albericus et Gilius iudices*: for Arabic, see line 21 below. *Albericus*, originally from Old High German, attested in Italy from the 9th century: Caracausi 1993, 1, 29b; *Gilius*, perhaps originally from Latin *Egidius*, via French *Gilles*: *ibid.*, 1, 725a.
- *Guillelmus quondam vicecomes Biccarī*: for Arabic, see line 21 below. *Guillelmus*, originally from Old High German \**Willi-helm*, needs no comment in Norman Sicily. *Vicecomes*, ‘viscount’, is a Latin term (also *baiulus*, ‘bailiff’) for the royal official in charge of an administrative district. In this case, William seems to have retired from office: see note to line 21 below.
- *Basili(us) de Honorio*: for Arabic, see line 22 below. *Basilius* is likely to derive directly from the Greek personal name Βασίλης, whereas *de Honorio*, ‘[the son] of Honorius’, may indicate that his father was Latin and therefore, perhaps, that his mother was Greek.

Line 10

- *a vallone qui dicitur Conqui*: *Conqui* is said to be a Sicilian form of *Conche*, from Latin *concha* (Greek κόγχη), ‘a shell-like cavity’ (Collura 1961, 125, n. 3; Caracausi 1993, 1, 431b). Here, it seems to describe the form of the man-made pools, troughs or other receptacles for water, or of the places in which water collects or is collected, called in Arabic *al-aḥwād*, sing. *ḥawd* (see note to line 22 below). Felicitously, Lane (1984, 1, 670b) quotes the Arabic saying: ‘He filled the *concha* (*ḥawd*) of his ear with the abundance of his speech’. The meanings of modern Sicilian *conca* include all these, as well as ‘low ground between mountains’ (Piccitto 1977, 1, 759b).
- *per mediētatem montis Chiperii*: see also line 12. Caracausi (1993, vol. 1, p. 402b) seeks to derive *Chiperii* from Greek κύπερος, via Latin *cyperus*, but it is more likely to be a phonetic transliteration of the Arabic *Ḥ. bārī* (see note to line 22 below).

- *per sindis*: the Arabic words *sanad al-dīs* (lines 22–3), literally ‘the acclivity of dis’, have been conflated into *sindis*, as if it were a geographical term or toponym. See note to line 22 below.
- *nemus quod dicitur Farrase*: Arabic *al-sha‘rā allatī yūqāl la-hā Farāsha* (line 23). *Farrase* is a phonetic transliteration of Arabic *Farāsha*, for which see note to line 23 below.
- *per balatas*: Arabic *ma‘a al-balāt* (line 23), ‘with the rocky-outcrop’. Arabic *balāt* was borrowed by Greek and Latin in Sicily during the 12th century, and is well established in medieval and modern Sicilian: Caracausi 1983, no. 29, 116–18.

Lines 10–11

- *ad vallonem Sancti Brancati*: unidentified, but note modern Casa Brancato (37.902, 13.460), 1.75km west of the site of the Hospital of St Laurence: Maurici 2016, 316–17.

Line 11

- *ad Guduranum*: Arabic, *al-Ghudrān* (line 24); modern Godrano: Caracausi 1993, 1, 742b. Medieval *Guduranum* / *al-Ghudrān* is said to have stood about 0.8km south-west of the modern town, around the old railway station (37.897, 13.424): see Maurici 1998, 83.
- *ad fines vinee Chichi* (Arabic *ilā ḥudūd jinān jīyī*: line 24): *Chichi* is a personal name, a phonetic transliteration of the Arabic *jīyī*: see note to line 24 below.

Arabic

Line 13

- *لما كان بتاريخ*: *lammā kāna bi-tārīkh*, ‘when it was the date of’. A standard opening for the Arabic documents of the Norman *dīwān* since the 1140s, see Johns 2002, 107, 120, 122, 123, 126, 127, 128, 130.
- *من شهر يناير*: *10 min yanār*, ‘the 10th of January’. The use of digits for the day of the month was rare but not unknown in the Norman *dīwān*: see von Falkenhausen, Jamil and Johns 2016, 62 n. 490, and 64. *Yanār*, ‘January’, was standard in the Norman *dīwān* from at latest 1134 onwards: Johns 2002, *Dīwānī* docs 13, 21 and 35, 304, 306, 310; also Private doc. 23, 322.
- *الحول الخامس عشر*: *al-ḥawl al-khāmīs ‘ashar*, ‘the fifteenth indiction’. The use of *al-ḥawl* for the indictional year, instead of the more common *al-indigtus*, is attested in the Norman *dīwān*: Johns 2002, 166; von Falkenhausen, Jamil and Johns 2016, 62, 64.

Lines 13–14

- *سنة ستة الاف وسبعمائة وخمسين من تاريخ العالم*: *sanat sittat ālāf wa-sab‘miya wa-khamsīn min tārikh al-‘ālam*, ‘in the year six-thousand-and-seven-hundred-and-fifty according to the date of the world’. For the use of the Byzantine year from the creation of the world, see the note to line 1 above.

Line 14

- *سبعمائة*: *sab‘miya*, ‘seven-hundred’. The document has *سبعمائه*, for Classical Arabic (CA) *sab‘imi‘a*. In line with vernacular practice, this document indicates an unequivocal ‘lightening’ of CA *hamza* in all positions, primary, medial and final, either leaving *hamza* entirely unspecified, as here, or occasionally pointing it as *yā*. Throughout our edition, we have therefore pointed the *yā* where medial *kursī yā* is indicated. In these notes we remark only those instances where the scribe himself has

pointed the *yā*. On the phenomenon of ‘lightened’ *hamza*, see Hopkins 1984, 19–33, paras 19–28, and the literature cited. As to the phonological implications for the loss of *hamza* in different positions, Ibn Makkī (1410/1990, chapter 11, 122–4) comments on those omissions and insertions of *hamza* in the spoken register with which he was familiar, as well as on the commonplace of primary and medial *hamza* replaced by *wāw* and *yā* in speech (ibid., pp. 47–8).

- *مولانا الانبرطور فردريك*: *mawlā-nā al-imbirātūr Fridirīk*, ‘Our lord the Emperor Frederick’. The savage truncation of Frederick’s full Arabic title is conspicuous and remarkable. The Latin is more generous: *dominus noster Fridericus, Dei gratia invictissimus Romanorum imperator semper augustus, Illustris Ierusalem, et Siciliæ Rex* (see lines 1–2). In Arabic we might expect something along the lines of *al-qayṣar al-mu‘azzam imbirātūr rūmīya fridirīk al-manṣūr bi-llāh mālik almāniya wa-lumbarḍiya wa-tusqāna wa-ūḍāliya wa-ankabardha wa-qalūriya wa-ṣiqillīya wa-mamlakat al-shām al-quḍsiya mu‘izz imām rūmīya al-nāṣir li-l-milla al-masīhiya*, reconstructed from Frederick’s Arabic inscription of AD 1229 from Jaffa in Palestine: see Sharon and Schragar 2012. See also the still grander Arabic titles of Constance and the young Frederick from their Latin–Arabic decree of November 1198: Jamil and Johns 2016, 122–3 and 146, lines 16–17.

- *من ملكه على الشام*: *min mulki-h ‘alā al-shām*, ‘of his rule over Syria’. Presumably abbreviated from the full Arabic title of the kingdom of Jerusalem, as in Frederick’s inscription from Jaffa, cited above.
- *اثنتين وعشرين سنة ... سبعة عشر سنة ... خمسة واربعين سنة*: Feminine اثنتين for ‘two’ conforms to CA, but CA سبع and عشر and خمس واربعين سنة. In common with other ‘Middle Arabic’ and vernacular varieties of Arabic, the deviation from CA usage shown here is conspicuous. On the syntactical deviations of the numerals in non-CA varieties, see Hopkins 1984, 187–204. On the regular use of *ithnayn* with the feminine, see ibid., 196–7, para. 199, and notes; Blau 1966, 374, para. 252, and n. 28.
- *من ملكه على صقلية خمسة واربعين سنة*: *min mulki-h ‘alā ṣiqillīya khamsa wa-arba‘īn sana*, ‘of his rule over Sicily forty-five years’. See note to line 2 above.

Line 15

- *صاحب الدواوين المعمورة والقوايت (؟) بجميع صقلية اوبرت*: *ṣāḥib al-dawāwīn al-ma‘mūra wa-l-qawāyit(?) bi-jamī‘ ṣiqillīya*, Latin *Imperialis doane de secretis et questorum magister per totam Siciliam* (line 3). For further discussion of Fallamonacha’s name and offices, see above, pp. 149–52. The office of *magister duana de secretis* / *ṣāḥib dīwān al-ma‘mūr* may be traced back to the 1140s: Johns 2002, 193–203. An Arabic document of September 1190 (Palermo, Archivio storico diocesano, Tabulario, diploma no. 27; Cusa 1982, 44–6) is the earliest appearance of the title here read as *dīwān al-qawāyit(?)*. Johns (2002, 204–5 and n. 56, and Private doc. 26, 323), before he had seen our document, and under the misapprehension that Garufi’s photograph of the document showed the word to be pointed with a *fā* originally read ‘the *dīwān* of the revenues’, *dīwān al-fawā‘id*, from *fawā‘id*, the plural of *fā‘ida*, meaning ‘profit’, ‘advantage’ and ‘benefit’, spiritual

and material, what is received and what is given. In fact, both in our document and in the document of 1190, the initial letter is written without points, and so can be read either as a *fā'* or a *qāf*. However, in our bilingual document, the juxtaposition of Latin *doana questorum* with Arabic *dīwān al-qawāyit*(?) clearly implies that both are terms for the bureau of the officials who had charge of public revenue and expenditure, and who were known in Latin as *questores* and in Arabic as *qawāyit*, i.e. the *qā'id*s of the Arabic administration (for whom see Johns 2002, 212–56 *et passim*). There remains only the slightest doubt that *qawāyit* is an irregular plural in place of CA *quwwād*, *qāda*, etc. A similar form is attested in the Arabic *Life of St Gregorius*: the irregular plural القوایت, presumably voiced as *quwwāt*, meaning ‘commanders’, in place of CA القواد *quwwād* (Marr 1906, 188). Blau (1966, 106, 12.2) regards the latter as evidence of devoiced final *dāl*, but Hopkins (1984, 33, para. 30b) finds no such instance in Arabic texts, only in Greek transliteration. In our case, too, the interference of Greek and even Latin may play a part. The addition of a *yā'* to the written form – القوایت, *al-qawāyit* – suggests that we may see the mediation of the Siculo-Greek loanword *kāit* (κάϊτ), pl. *kāites* (κάϊτες) – i.e. *qā'id*>*kāit*, pl. *kāites*>*qawā'it* – or even the Sicilian loanword *gaytus* (see Caracausi 1983, 238–40) – i.e. *qā'id*>*gaytus*, pl. *gayti*>*qawāyit*. Further evidence may yet be forthcoming and so, for the moment, we have preferred to indicate the slight doubt remaining as to the reading by qualifying it with a question mark – (؟) القوایت, *al-qawāyit*(?).

- الدواوين المعمورة: see also lines 16 and 20 below. For the use of *al-ma'mūr* /*a* in the Norman *dīwān*, see Johns 2002, 195.
- القوایت: note that the *yā'* (indicating a lightening of the *hamza* – see notes to line 14 above) and the *tā'* are clearly pointed, although the *qāf* is unpointed. See also line 20 below.
- نعلم . . . نحن: see above, p. 148 and n. 20.
- السجل, *sijill*: see Jamil and Johns 2016, 124, and above, p. 147 and n. 15.
- برجيسى المدينة: *burjīsī al-madīna*, ‘a burgess of the capital’, Latin *civis Panormi* (line 4). *Burgīsī*, presumably from Old French *burgeis* rather than from Latin *burgensis*, was well established in the Norman *dīwān* from at least the early 1140s: see von Falkenhausen, Jamil and Johns 2016, 20, n. 108.
- اكرلك, *ikrilik*, Latin *clericus* (lines 4, 12). Compare اكرلك *ikrilik* here with الاكرلك *al-ikirik* in line 26 below: both attempt the phonetic translation of Latin *clericus*, but the scribe seems uncertain of the position and role of the letter *lām*.
- الجبلية المقدسة: *al-jaballa al-muqaddasa*, Latin *Imperialis Cappelle* (line 4), the Cappella Palatina in the Royal Palace in Palermo. The transformation of Latin *cappella* into Arabic *jaballa* may be the sole occurrence in our document of a hard *jīm*, similar to Egyptian *gīm*, a phenomenon attested for Sicily by the grammarians – Ibn Makkī (1990, 54) notes the transformation of *jīm* into *qāf* and *kāf* (but also of *jīm* into *shīn*): see also 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1953, 26) for *jīm* into *qāf* – although extremely rare in documentary sources (Caracausi 1983, 61–2). However, the alternative is also worth considering. Latin initial *c-*, which at first sight we would expect

to have been pronounced hard, as in English *cat*, is rendered into Arabic as *jīm*, usually pronounced soft, as something like English *gem*. Elsewhere in our document, initial *jīm* regularly transforms into Latin *ch-* (Eng. *chip*): *J.fala*>*Chifale* (lines 4, 9; 16, 21); *J.bārī*>*Chiperi* (lines 10, 12; 22, 24); and *J.jī*>*Chichi* (lines 11; 24), which also transforms into Greek Τζιτσι (see note to line 24). (Note also medial *-ce->jīm* in *iudices*>*al-yūdiyy.n*: lines 7, 8, 9; 18, 22.) While we cannot, of course, know the precise phonetic pronunciation of Arabic *jīm* / Latin *chi-*, it is clear that it was some type of palato-alveolar consonant (Eng. *ship*, *genre*, *chip*, *job*, etc., respectively IPA ʃ-, ʒ-, ʧ-, ʤ- etc.). This was also so for the Latin personal names in our document that are rendered into Arabic with initial *jīm*; not just *Gilius*>*Jīliyū*, both voiced palato-alveolar sibilant fricatives (ʒ-), but also *Goffredus*>*J.frāy*. The latter is particularly revealing because, had *Goffredus* been pronounced as it is written, then the initial consonant would have been a voiced velar stop, as in English *Godfrey*, while the Arabic *J.frāy* strongly suggests that it corresponds to English *Geoffrey*. This raises the possibility that *cappella*, too, may have been written in the standard Latin form, but pronounced with an initial palato-alveolar consonant that transformed readily into Arabic *jaballa*. The phrase *al-jaballa al-muqaddasa* also appears in a Latin–Arabic *instrumentum* / *kitāb* of 1187 (Tabulario della Cappella Palatina, no. 19; Cusa 1982, no. 155, 83–5; Johns 2002, Private doc. 23, 322), in which the following transformations of Latin initial *ca-* to Arabic *ja/ā-* occur: *al-jaballa* (lines 12, 14); *al-jant.r*, for Latin *cantor* (lines 12, 14); and *al-jānūniya*, ‘the canons’ (line 12). See also *al-jānūniyā*, ‘the canons’, (and *Sant Alūjīyah* < Latin? *Santa Lucia*) in a Judaeo-Arabic document from Syracuse dated 1187 (Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario di Cefalù, no. 25, lines 6 and 9: edited by Wansbrough 1967, and corrected by Golb 1973, 108, n. 26. A bilingual Greek–Arabic ἔγραφο / *sijill* of 1172 (Tabulario della Cappella Palatina, no. 16; edited in Ménager 1960, Appendix 2, no. 33, 214–24; Johns 2002, *Dīwān* doc. 39, 312) adds the transformation of Greek *καγκε-* to Arabic *jansi-* (ὄ [άντι]-καγκελλάριος>*al-jansilr*: line 2). In Old French all of these words began with a voiceless palato-alveolar sibilant fricative consonant (ʃ- or tʃ-), which would have readily transformed into Arabic *jīm*: *chapele*, *chantré*, *chanoine* and *chancelier* (as already noted by De Simone 1988, 74). While it is no surprise to find such French pronunciation of Latin terms in the Norman palace in the 1170s and 1180s, the possibility that this practice may have continued until as late as 1242 is unexpected. (See also our comments on *sīr* in the notes to lines 19–20 below.)

Line 16

- القصر المعمور: *al-qaṣr al-ma'mūr*, see notes to lines 15 above and 20 below.
- المدينة المصونة: The passive participle *al-maṣūna* acknowledges that Palermo is protected by God, and takes the place of the longer augural formula (*du'ā'*) from the same Arabic root that was used by the Norman *dīwān* – *ṣāna-hā llāh*, ‘May God preserve it!': see Johns 2002, 138.
- اسبطل لورنس: *usbitāl Sant Lūrans*, Latin *Hospital* . . .

*Sancti Laurentii* (line 4). The word *usbiṭāl* is used in the Arabic text of the Monreale boundary register of 1182 (*Ribā‘ Usbiṭāl Shantaghni / Divisa terrarum Hospitalis Sancte Agnes*: Biblioteca centrale per la Regione Siciliana, Tabulario di Monreale, no. 32, lines 332/168: Cusa 1982, 235 / 197). For the location of the Hospital of St Laurence, see note to line 4 above.

- جفلة: *fī fahṣ J.fala*, ‘in the territory of *J.fala*’. For the location of *J.fala / Chif/phale* in the 12th century, see note to line 4 above.
- الذى يمسك: *alladhī y.ms.k*, ‘which he holds’. CA الذى يمسك, *alladhī yumsiku-hu*. One of two occurrences of a missing accusative *‘ā’id* in a relative clause (see also line 19 below). Compare Hopkins 1984, 244–5, para. 297.
- اعطا: An unorthodox rendition (*u‘tā?*) of CA passive أعطى *u‘ṭiya*, ‘he was given’; a phenomenon, also attested elsewhere, which has been related to both ancient and modern varieties of Arabic dialect: see Blau 1966, 191–2, para. 92, and the literature cited in n. 218; Hopkins 1984, 84, para. 82b and the literature cited in n. 6.
- الذى يمسك واعطا له عن ينافتسيوا: *alladhī y.ms.k wa-u‘ṭā la-hu* ‘an *banāfītsiyū*, ‘which he holds and possesses as a benefice’. The translator has struggled with the technical Latin terminology *quam tenet et possidet in beneficium* (lines 4–5). Note in particular the rendition of *beneficium* as *>banāfītsiyū*, which may indicate the mediation of Sicilian *bbenīfzīū*, etc. (Piccitto 1977, vol. 1, 408). See also above, pp. 146 and 148.

Line 17

- كنيسة: *kanīsiya*, ‘church’: a common Sicilian variant of CA كنيسة, *kanīsa*, see Caracausi 1983, 185–7.
- لنكونوا نعطيوه: *li-nakūnū nu‘ṭiyū-h*, ‘that we might set down for him’: for this distinctly *Ifriqī* dialectal usage, see above, pp. 148–9 and n. 20.
- امنا: CA أمناء, *umanā’*.

Line 18

- سؤاله: CA سؤاله, *su‘āla-hu*.
- اليودجين: *al-yūdij.y.n*, ‘the (two?) judges’ from Latin *iudices* (lines 7, 8, 9). It is unclear whether *al-yūdij.y.n* (‘the judges’), here and in line 21, is conceived as an ‘all-purpose’ plural ending *-īn*, *al-yūdijīn* or as a dual ending in *-ayn*, *al-yūdijayn*. On the phenomenon of the dual either being superseded by, or alternating with, the plural, see Hopkins 1984, 94, para. 84a and notes; Blau 1966, 209–13, para. 106 and notes.
- ليكونوا يختاروا: see above, pp. 148–9 and n. 20.
- البلد المذكورة: A feminine adjective, *al-madhkūra*, appears to accompany a usually masculine noun, *al-balad*. This may exemplify *scripta defectiva*, with the loss of medial *ā* from *al-bilād*, which would certainly command a feminine adjective: see Hopkins 1984, 11–12, para. 10, and the literature cited there.
- يكونوا يكتبوا لنا: *yakūnū* (without the introductory particle *li-*) *yaktubū la-nā*, ‘who can/might write for us’: see above, pp. 148–9 and n. 20. Compare Hopkins 1984, 215, para. 241, noting an unusual use of *yakūn* as an ‘index’ before another imperfect.

Line 19

- يطابعهم الذى كتبوا: CA يطابعهم الذى كتبوا. Another occurrence of a missing accusative *‘ā’id* in a relative clause (see also

line 16 above) where, in addition, a plural verb is used before the subjects – an example of so-called *lughat akalū-nī al-barāghūth*, ‘the language of the gnats ate me’: see Hopkins 1984, 138, para. 139, and the literature cited.

- اليودجين: see notes to line 18 above.
  - نعلموا: *nu‘limū*, ‘we inform’. For this distinctly *Ifriqī* dialectal usage, see above, pp. 148–9 and n. 20.
- Lines 19–20
- المولى سير اوبرت فلمونقة صاحب الدواوين المعمورة والقوايت (٤): *al-mawlā sīr Ūbart Fallamūniqa ṣāhib al-dawāwīn al-ma‘mūra wa-l-qawāyit(?) bi-jamī‘ ṣiqillīya*, ‘Your [God]-protected Presence, the Lord Sire Ūbart Fallamūnaqa’, Latin ‘Nobili viro eorum domino et benefactori domino Obberto Fallamonacha, Imperiali doane de secretis et questorum magistro per totam Siciliam’ (line 7). *Sīr*, presumably from Old French *sire*, appears only in the Arabic and perhaps reproduces an honorific form of address used to leading officials within the administration and the palace. For further discussion of Fallamonacha’s name and titles, see above, pp. 149–50.

Line 20

- كتابكم الشريف: *kitābu-kum al-sharīf*, ‘your noble letter’. For the significance of the formula, see above, p. 146.
- ناسا جبادا واشياخ: *nāsan jiyādan wa-ashyākh*, ‘trustworthy people and elders’, Latin *de probis et antiquis hominibus*. The phrase is clumsy and the translator does not seem to be aware of the concise formula *al-shuyūkh al-thiqāt*, ‘trustworthy elders’, employed by the Norman *dūwān* (Johns and Metcalfe 1999, 230–1). In the same phrase in line 18 (ناسا جبادا واشياخ, *nāsan jiyādan wa-ashyākhan*) *ashyākhan* bears a *tanwīn alif* to indicate that it is the direct object, conforming to CA practice and suggesting, perhaps, a desire to signal a certain formulaic gravity. Here, *ashyākhan* appears without *tanwīn alif*. On the contemporaneous presence and absence of *tanwīn alif*, see Hopkins 1984, 162; Blau 1966, 324, para. 221.2.

Line 21

- ليكونوا يكتبوا: *li-yakūnū yaktubū*, ‘that they might write’, see above, pp. 148–9 and n. 20.
- البيريك وجيليو: *Albīrik wa-Jīliyū*: see note to line 9 above.
- اليودجين: see note to line 18 above.
- غليالم الكاين دسقومي ببيقو: *Ghulyāl.m al-kāyin disqūmī bi-Bīqū*. Latin *Guillelmus quondam vicecomes Biccari*, ‘William the former viscount of Vicari’. The ‘viscount’ was a royal official appointed in charge of an administrative district (see note to line 9 above). *Ghulyāl.m* is the standard Arabic form in Sicilian documents for Latin *Guillelmus*, compare Greek Γουλιέλμος, Γουλιέλμος. *Al-kāyin* (CA *al-kā’in*) seems to imply that William was ‘the existing’ viscount of Vicari, whereas the Latin *quondam* can only mean that he was ‘the former’ viscount. Blau 1960, 439, para. 324, gives examples of *kāyin* denoting the imminent future, which might suggest that its temporal force could depend upon context; indeed, even *quondam* could be used poetically to mean ‘one day’ or ‘some day’ (e.g. Horace, *Satires*, 2.2, 82; *Aeneid* 6: 877), although here this cannot be the case. Arabic *Disqūmī* (Latin *vicecomes*: line 9) is attested in the Arabic text of the Greek–Arabic document of 1172 (see note to line 15 above: edited in Ménager 1960, 216, line 17; 217, line 7): Βουττάπος ὁ ποτὲ βεσκόμης, ‘Abū l-Ṭayyib

the former viscount' / *Abū l-Ṭayyib alladhī kāna disqūmī*, 'Abū l-Ṭayyib who was viscount', another retired royal official serving as a juror on a boundary inquest. *Disqūmī* seems to have been an established form, which came from Latin *viccomes* through the mediation of Greek, for *δισκόμης* is attested as early as 1166: Caracausi 1990, 166. See notes to line 9 above, and pp. 145–6.

Line 22

- باسيلي دانريو: *Bāsīlī Dānuriyū*, 'Basil [the son] of Honorius', see note to line 9 above and p. 145.
- الذى: CA *الذین*, *alladhīna*. The use of the invariable relative pronoun, *alladhī*, is well-attested in 'Middle Arabic' and vernacular usage: see Hopkins 1984, 240, para. 289, and notes.
- فابتدأوا: CA فابتدأوا or فابتدؤوا. For the absence of *alif fāṣila* against CA, in the third person plural of verbs, see Hopkins 1984, 52, para. 50b–c.
- الخندق الذى يعرف بالاحواض: *al-khandaq alladhī yu'raf bi-l-aḥwād*; Latin *a vallone qui dicitur Conqui* (see note to line 10 above). *Aḥwād*, plural of *ḥawd*: in the singular, most commonly used to refer to the *Ḥawd al-Rasūl*, 'the Pool of the Messenger [of God]' from which the blessed will drink at their resurrection; here, most probably referring to man-made pools, troughs or other receptacles for water, or to places in which water collects or is collected (see Sicilian *conca* in note to line 10 above): Lane 1984, 1, 670b–c. See also the note *فراشة*: *Farāsha* to line 24 below.
- جبل جبارى: *Jabal Ḥ. bārī*; Latin *mons Chiperū* (lines 10, 12). *Ḥ. bārī* (see also line 24) is written without *fatha* and *shadda*, but it is almost irresistible to read *Jabbārī*. It may, of course, be the Arabisation of an unknown ancient place name, but the Arabic word could suggest something that is 'high', 'mighty', 'proud' etc.; *al-Jabbār* is one of the names of God, and *Jabbār* is a common *ism*, which would give the *nisba* *Jabbārī*: Lane 1984, 373b–375b.
- يمور: CA *يُمُر*, i.e. long *wāw* for short vowel *ḍamma*, ostensibly *y.mūr* for *yamurr* (see also line 23): see Hopkins 1984, 6–7, para. 4 and literature cited, 'It is difficult, if not impossible, to make a neat distinction between those cases which attest to a genuine phonetic process and those which simply exhibit a peculiarity in the orthography'.

Lines 22–3

- سند النيس: *sanad al-dīs* 'the acclivity of dis'. *Dis* is a grass of the genus *Ampelodesmos*, which is gathered and used for weaving baskets, mats, etc. For the Latin *sindis*, see note to line 10 above.

Line 23

- الشعرا: *al-sha'ra*, CA *الشعراء*, *al-sha'ra*, 'the thicket', Latin *nemus* (line 10). See von Falkenhausen, Jamil and Johns 2016, 36, n. 218.
- فراشة: *Farāsha* (Latin, *Farrase*: line 10) is the name given to a wood (*nemus*; *al-sha'ra*); an Arabic geographical term denoting a muddy or swampy area of land, or the small amount of water left in a basin after the rest has evaporated: see Yāqūt 1866–73, 3, 863. The entry for *al-farāsha* in *Taj al-'arūs* 2011 (s.v. *f-r-sh*) is particularly suggestive in the context of this document: 'a small quantity of water remaining in pools (*al-ghudrān*: cf. line 24), beyond which can be seen the earth of the basin (*arḍ al-ḥawd*: cf. *al-aḥwād* in line 22). Al-Idrīsī (1975, 604)

describes the 'gushing waters and abundant pools' (*miyāhu-hā mutadaffiqatun wa-ghudrānu-hā mughdawdiqatun*) in the territory of Cefalà.

- يوقال: CA *يُقال*, i.e. long *wāw* for short vowel *ḍamma*: see note to line 22 above.

- يمور: CA *يُمُر*: see note to line 22 above.

Line 24

- الى الغدران: *al-Ghudrān* (Latin *ad Guduranum*: line 11); modern Godrano: see Caracausi 1993, 1, 742b.
- الطريق الطريق: For such reduplication of nouns, see Metcalfe 2018, 16–23.
- جنان جيجى: *jinān Ḥijī*, Latin *vinea Chichi* (line 11). *Ḥijī* / *Chichi* is a personal name, possibly derived from the Latin *cicer* (Italian *cece*) 'chickpea': compare Greek *Τζιτζί*, the name of a vassal granted by Roger I to the Greek monastery of St Mary's of Vicari in October 1097 (Becker 2013, Doc. 59, 230, line 4 from foot of page). See also Caracausi 1990, 598b; Caracausi 1993, 1, 394a.

Line 25

- منتهاهيه: *muntahāy.h* (CA *منتهاه*, *muntahā-hu*). This insertion of *yā*, displacing the pronominal suffix *-hu*, and causing the elision of intervocalic *hā*, is an unequivocal sign of phonetic process, surely related to vernacular practice. Compare Hopkins 1984, 44, para. 46b, and the literature cited there.

Line 26

- الاكرك: Compare with *اكرك* in line 15 above.
- تاكيدا له ودليلا على صحته: *ta'kīdan la-hu wa-dalīlan 'alā ṣiḥḥati-hi*, 'in confirmation of it and as a proof of its authenticity', a standard formula in the Norman *dīwān*: Johns 2002, 100 and n. 25, 166–7 n. 44.
- -----ه: The text ends with the letter *hā* in the shape of a poorly drawn trefoil, an abbreviation for *[inta]h[ā]*, 'it is finished', a standard symbol used in the Norman *dīwān* and other medieval Islamic chanceries to mark the end of a given text: see Johns 2002, 280, 310.

Line 27

- -----كتب عن امرنا: *kutiba 'an amri-nā [inta]h[ā]*, 'Written on my order. [It is finis]h[ed]', Fallamonacha's *'alāma*.

## Notes

- 1 Johns 2002, *passim*.
- 2 Jamil and Johns 2016, *passim*.
- 3 Geis 2014, no. 117, 475–6. He is known only from our document.
- 4 Ferdinando Maurici (2016) has recently reviewed all the evidence and confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt that the Hospital of San Lorenzo lay a kilometre or so to the south-west of modern Villafraati, at or near the late 18th-century church of Santa Maria in San Lorenzo (37.900857, 13.479915: unless otherwise specified all geographical coordinates are given in decimal degrees), roughly 40km by road south-south-east of Palermo, and 17km by road north-east of Vicari (*pace* Bagnera and Nef 2007, 301, and now *pace* the in most respects definitive and in any case indispensable study of the baths of Cefalà Diana by Bagnera and Nef 2018, 11–58 and especially 20–5, the Hospital of San Lorenzo cannot be identified with the Baths of Cefalà Diana, which lie north-north-west of the site of the Hospital, 3.3km as the crow flies and 5.5km by road).
- 5 Johns 2002, 170–86.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 193–203.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 172–86.



- Bartolomeo Fallamonica Gentile (c. 1450–c. 1515), author of a journey through the afterlife inspired by Dante but guided by Raymund Llull: Foà 1994.
- 31 Genova, Biblioteca Civica Berio, m.r.III.4.7, f. 517r: *Foliatium Notariorum Genuensium*, an 18th-century manuscript (first cited by Nuti 1994). I am immensely grateful to dott.ssa Emanuela Ferro of the Biblioteca Civica Berio for her generous assistance, not least in supplying me with an image of this folio. Ansaldo and Ogerio were the most prominent members of the Fallamonica in the mid-13th century, but Origo/Orrico de Auria (i.e. Doria) does not seem to be otherwise attested. For Ansaldo, *consiliarius Ianue*: Puncuh 1996, no. 373, 282 (28 August 1225), no. 448, 476 (16 September 1233); Dellacasa 1998, no. 717, 158 (19 February 1251), no. 720, 172 (18 February 1251), no. 727, 209 (13 September 1251), no. 745, 251 (4 March 1250), no. 748, 270 (5 June 1252), no. 760, 348 (8 June 1251), no. 763, 362 (20 October 1251); Madia 1999, no. 824, 15 (8 July 1267), no. 904, 202 (21 September 1263); Bibolini 2000, no. 1056, 220 (17 November 1256), no. 1058 224 (17 November 1256). For Ogerio, *consiliarius Ianue*: Puncuh 1996, no. 368, 264 (8 October 1224), nos 424–6, 422, 424, 425 (22–23 May 1218), no. 429, 430–1 (12 July 1218), no. 437, 454 (22–23 May 1218); Dellacasa 1998, no. 717, 158 (19 February 1251), Bibolini 2000, no. 1031, 171 (20 November 1054); *iudex*: Madia 1999, no. 822, 6 (19 July 1267).
- 32 Genoese renewal of 17 September 1259: Dellacasa 1998, no. 742, 237–42, esp. 242; also Brantl 1994, no. 193, 301–2. See also p. 150 and n. 51.
- 33 See the document of April 1238, cited in n. 23 above.
- 34 The record of the inquest survives only as a transumpt: Garofalo 1835, doc. 58, 76–87, especially 80, line 9, to 83, line 4.
- 35 Powell 1966; Petti Balbi 2001; Macconi 2002, 127–37.
- 36 Nicola Spinola: Petti Balbi 2005–8; Ansaldo De Mari: Cancellieri 1990.
- 37 Vitale 1951, 272, 285. Mazzaresse Fardella 1986, 121–2; Nuti 1994; Patti Balbi 2001, 82.
- 38 Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, no. 232, 224.
- 39 The best and most up-to-date summary is provided by Friedl 2005, 490, 496–500, 502, 510–11 and 516; see also index (620).
- 40 See Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, Introduzione.
- 41 Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 1, no. 99, 80: *magister portulanus Sicilie ultra flumen Salsum et nunc secretus Panormi*. He remained *magister portulanus* until 15 December 1239: *ibid.*, 1, no. 259, 259. Kamp 1974, 92. Friedl 2005, 510–11.
- 43 For his activities 1239–40, see Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, indices, and pp. 150–1. For the ‘palace Saracens’, see Johns 2002, 212–56. For the *secretus Panormi*, see Kamp 1974, 55–6.
- 44 Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 2, nos 743–5, 743–665, especially no. 744, 664.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 2, no. 1037, 904: *statuimus te doane de secretis et questorum a Faro per totam Siciliam magistrum*. Fallamonacha seems to have also fulfilled the duties of *secretus Panormi*, for that office apparently stood vacant until August 1251: Kamp 1974, 91.
- 46 Johns 202, 193–203.
- 47 See note to line 15 above and the works there cited.
- 48 Original: Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario di San Filippo di Demenna, no. 29; edited in Cusa 1982, no. 192, 452–6: τὸ ἐνδοξοτάτος ἄρχων καὶ μέγας σερκετικὸς κύριος Ῥομβέρτος Φαλλαμόνακα, ‘of the lord archon and the great *sekretikos*, lord Rombert Fallamonaca’, a Greek version of his Arabic and Latin titles.
- 49 Genuardi 1909, doc. 2, 238–43.
- 50 Kamp 1974, 90, 91.
- 51 Friedl 2013, DD M. 33, 74, ll. 32–5; renewed March 1259, Friedl 2013, DD M.64, 149, ll. 17–20; DD M. 65, 153, ll. 27–27-3: *Liberamus etiam Ubertum Falamonacam et familiam eius totam, restituentes eis domos et possessiones suas, datis nobis duobus filiis suis obsidibus, donec posuerit rationem de officiis que exercuit, de quibus rationem non posuit nec habet ydoneam apodisiam*. There is no reason to believe that he was condemned for having played some role, with Genoese associates, in the Muslim rebellion of 1243–6, *pace* Bresc 1974, 273 and Luttrell 1980, 292–7. When they wrote, he was still assumed to have been a convert from Islam, and not, as has since been shown, an Arabic-speaking Christian. For the Muslim rebellion, see Maurici 1987, 48–9.
- 52 *Quaterniones et rationes alias scriptas quondam Raymundi secreti*: Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, no. 260, 262.
- 53 Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, no. 259, 259.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 1, nos 539–42, 512–15. Sciascia 1989, 1176 and nn. 9–10.
- 55 *Annales Siculi* 1928, 118, s.a. 1241: *Obertus de Fallamonaca de mandato domini imperatoris iuit apud Maroccum*. It is possible that the *Annales Siculi* is here referring to the embassy to Tunis in the previous year.
- 56 Winkelmann 1880, 1, no. 707, 561–2. See also Collura 1951, 17–18. The document states that Follamonacha had just returned *de Hispaniae partibus* where he had been sent as ambassador to the *rex Emyr Ilmumin*. This cannot refer to the Almohad caliph (*pace* Johns 2002, 246), who by this time was confined to Morocco, but no Spanish ruler at this time used the caliphal title *amīr al-mu‘minīn*. The first Naṣrid, Muḥammad I, used the style *amīr al-muslimīn*, for which the Latin is presumably an error. (I am most grateful to my D.Phil. student, Mr Péter Nagy, for pointing this out to me.)
- 57 See above, n. 23.
- 58 Di Matteo 2013, 340–1.
- 59 Modern Maseria Casa Fellamonica: 37.9666, 13.1256.
- 60 Nania 1995, 102–3, 218–32. See also Alfano and Sacco 2014, 20.
- 61 Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, no. 63, 64, no. 181, 164, no. 259, 259.
- 62 IGM Ciminna 259 IV S.O. (1970) places ‘Contrada Fella Monica’ at 700890, just west of the SS.121 at km 218, north of the scarp of rock (37.839785, 13.527842). ‘Fellamonaco’ is marked here on von Schmettau’s map of 1720–1: Dufour 1995. Santagati 2006, 1, 31, claims that von Schmettau erroneously reports a dialectal form of the correct toponym ‘Feudo della Monaca’, but the claim is baseless; the place name ‘Fallamonica’ is attested since at least the early 19th century (Gattuso 1975, 41). There is also a Contrada Fellamonica in the *comune* of Mezzoiuso (e.g. it is the address of Mezzoiuso Carburanti in via Stazzone, 37.864400, 13.467142).
- 63 Original: 6 March 1276, Indiction IV: Palermo, Archivio Storico Diocesano, Tabulario, no. 62, lines 39, 42; ed. Mortillaro 1843, no. 62, 226–3. See also Gattuso 1975, 7 n. 12, citing the 17th-century collection of ‘Privilegi della famiglia Calvello’, Palermo, Biblioteca Comunale, MS. Qq E 56, f. 50, and Bresc 2001, paras. 26–27. What claims to be the renewal by Frederick II in 1229 to Mattheus de Calvellis of a Greek molybdobull of King Roger granting these *casalia* to Goffridus of Palermo, son of Goffridus the Seneschal and grandfather of Mattheus (ed. Winkelmann 1880, 1, no. 306, 275, from a copy of notarial record dated 1339 in the same manuscript) is of dubious diplomatic status and looks suspiciously like an attempt to create an ancient Norman pedigree for the Calvelli. That said, the *Goffridus Senescalcus* who first appears amongst the witnesses to a Greek–Latin privilege of Roger I dated June 1090 and renewed and confirmed by Roger II in May 1117 (original, Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario dei monasteri di San Filippo

- di Fragalà e di Santa Maria di Maniaci, no. 1, line 35; ed. Becker 2013, no. 13, 78–81), and then as a witness (*Goffridus Senescallus*) to what seems to be an authentic and contemporary copy of a Latin privilege of Roger I dated 1094 (Patti, Archivio storico diocesano, Capitolo Cattedrale di Patti, Carpettazza no. 2B, lines 23–4; ed. Becker 2013, no. 40, 165–8), could well have had a great-grandson still living in 1229. It may even be worth noting that the family name *Calvellus* (presumably a diminutive form of Latin *calvus*, ‘bald’ — and thus scarcely a distinctive epithet) is well attested north of the Alps before the Norman conquest of Sicily, e.g. in 11th-century Anjou where Gerald *Calvellus* was a regular member of the *comitatus* of the counts of Anjou *circa* 1020–60; Bertrand de Broussillon 1903, 1: 3, 79, 88, 95, 162, 209, 222, 305, 420 and 2: 11. The Calvelli seem to have eventually inherited Fallamonacha’s lands, including his estate at Barca: Marrone 2006, 82, 107, 108, 463.
- 64 Fitalia, probably modern Masseria Fitalia, west of modern Campofelice di Fitalia (37.827599, 13.492298); Barmasse, also Bramasa, unidentified; Mizilcharez, also Rahalkerames, etc., possibly Cozzo s. Nicola, 5km south of Campofelice (37.781, 13.483); Maurici 1998, no. 97, 81, no. 31, 68, and no. 200, 98.
- 65 For the case of ‘Abd Allāh, sent to John the Moor at Lucera, see Carbonetti Vendittelli 2002, 1, no. 300, 308; ‘Abd Allāh was a common name and so he is unlikely to be the embroiderer (*Abdalla servus noster tarrasiator*) at Lucera in April 1240 (*ibid.*, 2, no. 907, 801). For John the Moor see: Taylor 2003, 127–30; Houben 2016, 15–16.
- 66 Winkelmann 1880, 1, no. 707, 561–2: *Ad huius ergo rei memoriam et imperialis curie cautelam hoc presens scriptum doane in Latino tantum sibi et suis successoribus exinde fieri iussimus per manus notarii Mathei Grilli, ad scribendum instrumenta ipsa a nobis statuti et iurati, cum propter multitudinem aliorum servitorum curie alii notarii doane non sufficerent ad scribendum signo nostro Saraceno et sigillo fecimus communari.*
- 67 Johns 2002, 186–92.
- 68 Huillard-Bréholles 1852, 5, part 1, 427: *De Saracenis vero qui Panormum de casualibus advenientes in Sarracado suum non roborant incolatum, ut scribis, volumus et mandamus ut eos ad veniendum Panormum et firmandas mansiones suas ibidem per bona verba inducas et moneas, ipsis favorem et gratiam promissurus.*
- 69 *Ibid.*, 626: *Quia beneplaciti nostri est ut omnes Sarraceni quos dudum venire mandavimus de Sicilia partibus, in Luceriam reducantur: in this mandate of 25 December 1239, although dudum is certainly imprecise, it cannot refer to the deportations of the early 1220s, and a far more recent exodus must be intended. See Maurici 1987, 47–8.*
- 70 July 1243: *Annales Siculi* 1928, 118: *omnes Saraceni de Sicilia tamquam rebelles ascenderunt in montana et ceperunt Jatum et Alicatam (corr. Antellam).* Autumn 1246: Huillard-Bréholles 1852, 6, part 1, 471–2.; Taylor 2003, 17–19.
- 71 Friedl 2005, 494–5.
- contexte historique et fonctions’, in Guérin-Beauvois, M. and Martin, J.-M. *Bains curatifs et bains hygiéniques en Italie de l’Antiquité au Moyen Âge*, Rome, 263–308.
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# Chapter 16

## Gothic Revival Architecture and Decoration between Bourbon Absolutism and Sicilian Nationalism in Palermo in the Early 19th Century

Pierfrancesco Palazzotto  
Diocesan Museum of Palermo,  
University of Palermo

By the mid-19th century the history of medieval Sicily was well known in Europe, due in part to the many Grand Tour travellers who no longer simply paid attention to the classical antiquities of Rome, Pompeii and Magna Grecia.

Following the writings and interests of Karl Friedrich Schinkel, who visited Sicily in 1804,<sup>1</sup> and Jacques J. Hittorff and Ludwig Zanth (1822–4), there came to Palermo Jean F. d'Ostervald (1822–6), Girault de Prangey (1834), Henry Gally Knight (1836) and many others, in whose writings not just classical antiquity, but also the great Norman buildings of Palermo featured: the Cuba, the castle of Mareolce, the Cloister of Monreale, the church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti and the cathedral.<sup>2</sup> In 1836 French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879) also arrived in Palermo, and admired the restoration works of the cathedral and the Royal Palace. We can only speculate on the influence these might have had on him.<sup>3</sup>

However, interest in a Gothic revival had emerged earlier in Palermo, even before the start of the 19th century, and thus much earlier than in the rest of Italy, especially in the field of architecture.<sup>4</sup>

To what should we attribute this almost unforeseen look to the past? It is not sufficient to simply proclaim that it came about because of the striking presence of medieval buildings on the island and in its capital, as other medieval monuments obviously also survived throughout Italy, and not everywhere did an explosion of interest in this stylistic language occur with the same force during the same period.<sup>5</sup>

There must be another reason, which should be examined within the cultural context that developed specifically in Palermo, which was the result of contacts between personalities of the highest cultural level and was further encouraged by a fortuitous and unmistakable opportunity. All this certainly falls within the cultural context of Europe and is linked with the influence that came from the British Gothic revival.<sup>6</sup>

### The restoration and valuation of the cathedral

The opportunity that triggered the revival of interest in the Norman past came about, paradoxically, during the damaging restorations of the most important and sacred monument in Palermo: the cathedral. Indeed, in 1781 drastic renovation and modernisation works began at the Norman church, which included the removal of almost all the internal decorations from the medieval and renaissance periods.<sup>7</sup> Only one piece of the extensive mosaic programme survives: the mosaic of the *Madonna as Advocate for the Human Race*, which in the middle of the 19th century was placed in the Kings Cemetery of the cathedral.<sup>8</sup>

The paradox, then, was that on the inside a very modern and elegant church was created (**Fig. 1**), whereas on the outside it was decided to maintain the original look, apart from the addition of a large dome (1789–94),<sup>9</sup> and smaller domes for the new side chapels. In fact the patron of the 'restauration', Archbishop Serafino Filangieri (1762–76), in 1766 wrote to Marquis Bernardo Tanucci, 'Segretario di Casa Reale per gli Affari di Sicilia', to propose either the restoration of only some parts or 'sin da fondamenti e con più appropriato disegno far le nuove elevazioni', by evaluating, in the latter case, 'la conservazione dell'esteriore



Figure 1 Interior of Palermo Cathedral (photo: author)

antico ornato gotico’, and in 1767 asked for the involvement of the famous architect Ferdinando Fuga (1699–1782).<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the directors of the works, among whom was the famous Giuseppe Venanzio Marvuglia (1729–1814),<sup>11</sup> the greatest Sicilian architect during the transition from late baroque to neoclassicism, literally moved forward the entire 15th-century portico through anastylosis and disguised the new southern façade of the transept with a vague neo-Gothic style.<sup>12</sup> The works, which concluded in 1801, were perhaps the first example of their kind in Palermo (**Fig. 3**).

In 1802, very soon after the restoration works had been completed, there followed an explicit request from the Bourbon king, Ferdinand IV, that Marvuglia should install the neo-Gothic cladding on the dome, as it was the only clashing element that remained.<sup>13</sup>

Actually, Marvuglia, with the help of his son Alessandro Emmanuele (1771–1845),<sup>14</sup> had designed what was for the time quite an avant-garde model, a pastiche of Norman, 14th- and 15th-century features, but this was never executed (**Fig. 3**).<sup>15</sup>

The direct involvement of the king in defence of the medieval style of the cathedral, which was then still termed ‘barbarian’, demonstrates a key intervention, which was not an isolated occurrence and one that I will attempt to explain in due course.

It is necessary to ask what had changed since the royal decision had been made to modernise the old cathedral with the late baroque big dome. Why had it been decided to destroy a medieval and renaissance monument, only to now,

instead, want to disguise its dome because of remaining Gothic traces? At first, the early interest in Gothic (ancient) architecture was probably not so important (at least for the Bourbon government). In fact, in 1779 the cathedral’s Chapter of Canons had asked to change Fuga’s project because the church in that way ‘resta parte col disegno Gotico e parte col disegno Romano e viene irregolare’; in the same year, however, the king decided to maintain the first design.<sup>16</sup> We do not know if Fuga wanted to preserve the Gothic style inside or outside (the latter had been suggested by Archbishop Filangieri), but it seems that the cathedral’s Deputation did not like the idea.<sup>17</sup> Help came through a famous traveller. Henry Swinburne arrived in Palermo at the end of 1777 and wrote about the cathedral that the ‘Gothic edifice built in 1185 by Archbishop Walter’ was threatened with ruin and that its architecture was ‘not the most pleasing of that style’. He continued: ‘The whole pile is in a tottering condition, and calls for speedy assistance; a plan for rebuilding a great part of it has been given in by M. Fuga, the King’s architect, who proposes to raise a cupola, and refit it entirely in the modern taste.’<sup>18</sup>

One important question should be addressed, namely, what did the Deputation propose in opposition to Fuga’s project? Unfortunately, we do not know, because the cathedral’s Maramma Archive was destroyed in 1860 and no other documents remain. Was the contrast between old and modern taste that was referred to located on the inside or the outside of the church? In my opinion, it refers to the southern



Figure 2 Palermo Cathedral: southern façade (photo: author)

façade, because the interior had not retained its original medieval appearance due to the many changes made in the Renaissance and baroque periods.<sup>19</sup> In fact, in 1766 Archbishop Filangieri had asked for the external Gothic appearance to be conserved, but did not mention the interior at all. Therefore I would like to propose a new hypothesis. It was always thought that the modern dome was the essential element of the cathedral restoration project, but while this was certainly true for Filangieri and Fuga, it was not true for

the Deputation, who did not want the dome at all. The Deputation thought that it was the most discordant element of the entire cathedral, and it was immediately branded as such by all critics, chroniclers and travellers.<sup>20</sup> The Deputation's new proposal was radically different from that of Fuga. I believe that Marvuglia, Salvatore Attinelli and probably the noble Alessandro Vanni of San Vincenzo, who was a member of the Deputation and whose design had been discarded by Filangieri, wanted to implement only simple repairs to the old cathedral structures, without any innovations. If the initial problem was the state of degradation and the danger to the church, then great economic savings could have been achieved without destroying the old church and without heavy internal and, above all, external changes.

Nevertheless, the king decided in 1779 to approve Fuga's project again, and it was implemented with great care, as outlined in surviving documents.<sup>21</sup> Afterwards, evidently, Ferdinand IV changed his mind, probably because of the pre-Romantic predilections that had reached Palermo, his councillors and himself.

### Early Bourbon interest in the royal Norman past

We should also keep in mind the interest stimulated by the opening in 1781 of the marble tombs of the Norman and Hohenstaufen rulers, which had remained closed for at least two centuries.<sup>22</sup>

The opening of the tombs was carefully recorded by the chroniclers of the period, starting with the famous



Figure 3 Giuseppe Venanzio and Alessandro Emmanuele Marvuglia, wooden model for the neo-Gothic cladding of the dome of Palermo Cathedral, c. 1802, Palermo Diocesano Museum (photo: author)

publication by Francesco Daniele in 1784, dedicated to King Ferdinand IV, which detailed the observations of the canon of the cathedral, Rosario Gregorio.<sup>23</sup> All this probably came as a revelation, but also represented a memory that was never really forgotten: that Palermo and the cathedral had belonged to an ancient lost kingdom, which was still recorded in an inscription inside the medieval porch of the cathedral, ‘Prima Sedes, Corona Regis et Regni Caput’ – the first seat, the crown of the king, and the capital of the kingdom.<sup>24</sup> The inscription indicated the founding roots of the Sicilian nation, as well as royal legitimacy.<sup>25</sup> In addition, another inscription, placed underneath it, recorded all the kings who had been crowned there, from Roger to Charles of Bourbon (Charles III of Spain), father of Ferdinand IV (Fig. 4).

In 1784 Rosario Gregorio became the editor of the *Notiziario del Regno*, the official journal of culture for the royal government,<sup>26</sup> and in 1788 was made Lecturer in Sicilian Feudal and Public Law at the Regia Accademia degli Studi, which became the Royal University of Palermo in 1805.<sup>27</sup> In his academic role, Gregorio supported the absolutist politics of the Bourbon kings, for example by contesting that the ‘Great Count Roger’ had been a *primus inter pares*, a discourse that was sustained by the Sicilian barons, because it reinforced – historically and legally – the traditional privileges of the aristocracy and justified limiting the centralised power of the Bourbons of Naples, kings of Sicily since 1734 with the accession of Charles of Bourbon.<sup>28</sup>

In 1790 Gregorio published *Rerum arabicarum quae ad historiam siculam spectant ampla collectio*, the first scientific study about Arab culture in Sicily, and it was Gregorio who in 1802 instructed the painter Mariano Rossi (1731–1807) on the iconography for the new frescoes for Palermo Cathedral, including *The Assumption of the Virgin* (patron saint of the cathedral) and *Robert and Roger Return the Church of Palermo to the Bishop Nicodemus*.<sup>29</sup> Probably, in Gregorio’s mind, the latter image contained a political message that interpreted the conquest of Sicily as a mission of liberation, to restore Sicily to Christianity (Fig. 5).

This is precisely how also, some decades ago, the mosaic of *Christ entering Jerusalem*, placed in the presbytery of the Cappella Palatina in the Norman palace, was interpreted.<sup>30</sup> Whether correct or not, we know for certain that the Bourbons, during their visits to Palermo, watched the liturgy in the chapel from a small stage placed directly in front of that mosaic.

With Rossi’s frescoes of 1802 (the same date as the neo-Gothic project for the dome), the cathedral again became the temple of the dynasty of the Sicilian kings and a symbol of legitimacy, recognised by royal authority. However, all this did not come to maturity immediately. In fact, in 1785 the architects Marvuglia and Attinelli wrote that it was necessary to ‘situare e polire i mosolei dei serenissimi regnanti di Sicilia’,<sup>31</sup> but by 1798 there was still no clear idea about a prominent position for the royal tombs, and we might even say that their final placement in the first two chapels on the south nave was (and is) absolutely not adequate.<sup>32</sup>

### The first signs of a Gothic revival architecture

Meanwhile, there were many more sources of inspiration that led to the rediscovery of an architecture that was

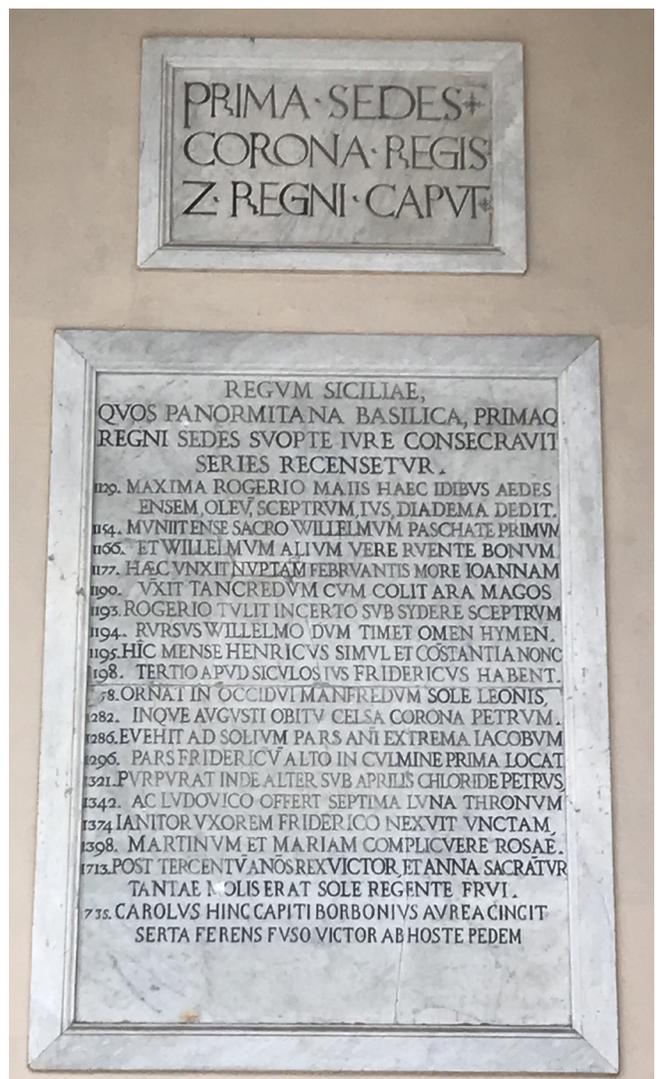


Figure 4 Tombstones with the succession of the Kingdom of Sicily, southern portico of Palermo Cathedral (photo: author)

considered to be Arab, or at least to display its influence. Initially this phenomenon was about pure exoticism, not very different from *chinoiserie* or *Turquerie*, but in the course of the first part of the 19th century it grew to incorporate important cultural contributions, especially in light of the studies into the origins of Gothic architecture in Europe.<sup>33</sup>

France and Germany vied for the birthright of Gothic architecture as the manifestation of a national architecture. The Englishman Thomas Hope (1769–1831) also contributed to the discussion, citing as Gothic monuments in Sicily the cathedrals of Messina, Monreale and Palermo, although he incorrectly stated (perhaps as a result of the so-called restoration of the interior): ‘Palermo: la vecchia chiesa detta Madre Chiesa, che era gotica, ed ora fu demolita’.<sup>34</sup> It is certainly not a coincidence that Hope’s first publication in an Italian translation, in 1840, was part of the library of the Palermitan architect Emmanuele Palazzotto, to whom I shall shortly turn.<sup>35</sup>

It is known that archaeologist and historian Jean-Baptiste Seroux D’Agincourt (1730–1814) played a very important role in the rediscovery of medieval monuments, and it is interesting to note that he was linked to a French architect, Lèon Dufourny (1754–1818).<sup>36</sup> Dufourny resided in Palermo for four years, until 1793, introducing the French taste for the



**Figure 5** Mariano Rossi, *Robert and Roger Return the Church of Palermo to the Bishop Nicodemus*, 1802, in the apse at Palermo Cathedral (photo: author)

neoclassical.<sup>37</sup> He designed, for example, the Gymnasium of the Botanical Gardens, which was eventually executed by one of his closest Palermitan friends, the above-mentioned Giuseppe Venanzio Marvuglia.

Dufourny was also interested in medieval architecture,<sup>38</sup> drafted designs for an Arab house in 1791 and probably put Seroux D'Agincourt in touch with the son of Giuseppe Venanzio, the young Alessandro Emmanuele, also an architect,<sup>39</sup> who, for the publication of Seroux's *Storia dell'Arte* (1808), provided drawings of the Norman palace of La Zisa.<sup>40</sup> In La Zisa, the French art historian claimed to recognise clear examples of Arab culture, just like Swinburne had. A copy of this volume, too, could be found in Emmanuele Palazzotto's library.<sup>41</sup>

From 1791 to 1797 the neo-Norman high altar of the Cappella Palatina, the church inside the Royal Palace, was built, probably commissioned by Mgr. Alfonso Airoidi (1729–1817), Ciantro della Cappella Palatina, Cappellano Maggiore del Regno,<sup>42</sup> 'Judge of the Monarchy', protector of Gregorio and highly respected by Dufourny.<sup>43</sup> Airoidi was one of the dignitaries present at the opening of the tombs, as well as the Prince of Torremuzza, Gabriele Lancillotto Castelli, 'Regio custode delle Antichità in Val di Mazara', who would become the patron for the volume by Daniele.<sup>44</sup>

Alessandro Emmanuele Marvuglia, who with his father

designed the re-cladding for the dome of the cathedral around 1802, was also the author (perhaps again with his father) of some of the earliest examples of neo-Gothic architecture in Palermo: the coffee house of the Villa Ventimiglia di Belmonte all'Acquasanta (1804), built by Salvatore Palazzotto (1751–1824), father of architect Emmanuele;<sup>45</sup> the spiral staircases of the Palazzina Reale alla Cinese (1805–6);<sup>46</sup> and the twin pavilions in the park of the Favorita (c. 1810–14),<sup>47</sup> inspired by the Torre de Oro of Seville but whose crown, in my opinion, imitates the apse of Palermo Cathedral (**Fig. 6**).

At this point, the revival was still a non-philological one and should rather be ranked on the same level as exoticism, and seen as a mere curiosity, as *divertissement*, while it is nevertheless interesting to note that, around 1810–15, the son of Ferdinand IV, the hereditary prince and viceroy Francis (later King Francis I), had a tower inside his Palermitan estate at Boccadifalco decorated in the Gothic style<sup>48</sup> by architect Gaetano Bernasconi (**Fig. 7**).<sup>49</sup> Evidently, Prince Francis, like the Neapolitan Archbishop Filangieri concerning the cathedral 30 years earlier (supported by King Ferdinand), preferred to rely on an esteemed Neapolitan architect who had his personal trust, such as Bernasconi, a student and co-worker of Carlo Vanvitelli.<sup>50</sup>

### An architecture for royal authority

There is no doubt that the prince wanted to make the 'Milinciana' tower at Boccadifalco look particularly ancient, but he also certainly wanted it to be representative of royal presence, perhaps just like a Norman castle. In this case, it would be the first time that the royal Bourbon family in Palermo used the medieval Sicilian style for an exemplary and identifying purpose, namely to support its own royal authority.

We should keep in mind that the royal family, due to the Francophile rebellions in Naples, resided in Palermo in exile between 1798 and 1802, and again from 1806 to 1815, under the protection of the English.<sup>51</sup> For the Bourbon court, of prime importance was without a doubt the parallel between the Norman absolute monarchy and the legitimate and authoritarian Bourbon rule, which was now threatened by the popular and aristocratic liberalist forces, who, instead, recognised in their Norman heritage a proper historic autonomy for the Kingdom of Sicily, distinct and separate from the Kingdom of Naples. In my opinion, both Bourbon absolutism and Sicilian nationalism used the Arab-Norman architecture as a mark of identity.<sup>52</sup>

This mental process must have taken concrete form after Ferdinand's actions of 1815. The king had been received and treated with all necessary honours during his exile, creating for the Sicilians a hope and an illusion of finally having restored the Kingdom of Sicily, by his constant physical presence in Palermo.

Instead, that year, at the end of the French occupation, he immediately returned to Naples, abolished the Constitution that had been promulgated in 1812 under pressure from Lord William Bentinck (foreign Minister of Sicilian government), and thus, above all, fulfilled what appeared to be a complete betrayal of the expectations of the Sicilian nation.<sup>53</sup>

In 1816 the king, in order to strengthen his power on the island, which seemed to want to escape his rule, cancelled the formal existence of the Kingdom of Sicily, reuniting it with the Kingdom of Naples as the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but retaining Naples as the capital. This was a real affront to Sicily that would have sanctioned a break, but which the sovereign sought to heal by issuing political messages through artistic commissions.

Hence, after the random neo-Gothic examples by Marvuglia, the revival took a much clearer direction in the third decade of the 1800s. The time was right and, following the earthquake of 1823, it was necessary to repair the great baroque bell tower of the cathedral, which had been built on the archbishop's palace after 1726 by architect Giovanni Amico (1684–1754). As the cathedral was a church of royal patronage, every intervention had to be agreed between the king and the archbishop of Palermo, who at the time was Pietro Gravina, prince of Montevago (1749–1830). The archbishop issued a competition for the reconstruction of the tower in the Gothic style, which he called the 'necessary' style, and it was the architect Emmanuele Palazzotto (1798–1872), former student of Alessandro Emmanuele Marvuglia, who won the competition by taking inspiration from the 14th-century bell towers, and received in 1826 the approval of King



Figure 6 Pavilion in the Favorita park, Palermo, designed by Alessandro Emmanuele Marvuglia, before 1815 (photo: author)

Figure 7 The so-called 'Milinciana' tower at Boccadifalco, Palermo, designed by Gaetano Bernasconi, 1810–15 (photo: author)



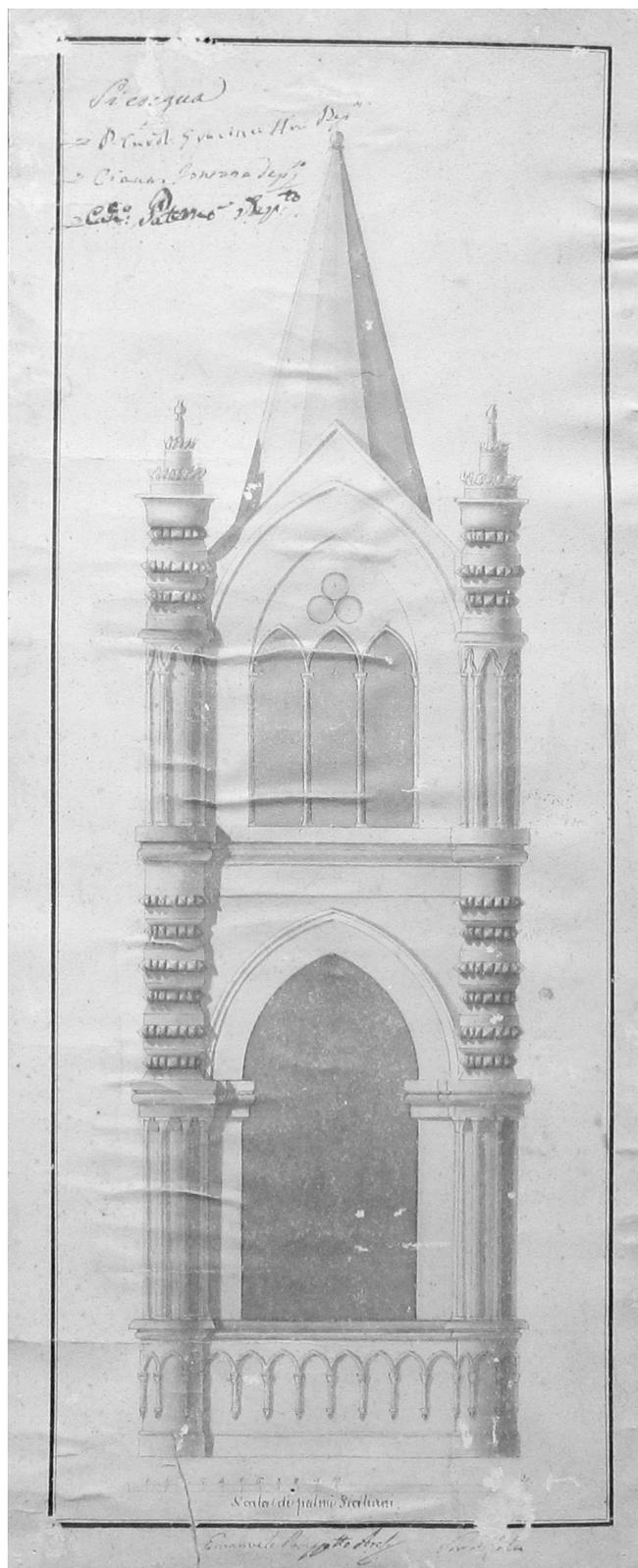


Figure 8 Emmanuele Palazzotto's neo-Gothic designs for the bell tower of Palermo Cathedral, 1826. Archivio Palazzotto, Palermo

Francis I of the Two Sicilies (**Fig. 8**).<sup>54</sup> The latter, as mentioned above, had commissioned the neo-Gothic-style tower at his Boccadifalco estate, which was built by Luigi Miranda and Salvatore Palazzotto,<sup>55</sup> father of Emmanuele.

Shortly afterwards, in 1827, Duke Ettore Pignatelli Aragona Cortes di Monteleone, descendant – as he claimed himself – of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, acquired a plot of land by the sea near Acquisanta in



Figure 9 Photograph from c. 1870 of Villa Domville, formerly Pignatelli Aragona Cortes Acquisanta, Palermo, designed by Ettore Pignatelli, Domenico Cavallaro and others, 1827–9. Archivio Palazzotto, Palermo

Palermo and by 1829 had built there a wooden chalet in the neo-Gothic style. It was designed by the architect Domenico Cavallaro Spadafora (1777–1837),<sup>56</sup> a collaborator of Domenico Lo Faso and Pietrasanta, Duke of Serradifalco (1783–1863) (**Fig. 9**).<sup>57</sup> The choice of style was surely not a coincidence. In fact, in the same year the German architect Friedrich Maximilian Hessemer (1800–1865) arrived in Palermo and was invited to the house of the Duke of Serradifalco where he was surprised, as he himself wrote in his diaries, that they discussed Gothic architecture so excitedly, as though it was a matter of life or death.<sup>58</sup> This indicates that, by that time, the interest in medieval, Norman-Hohenstaufen architecture had spread through the cultured society of Palermo and had become almost a political manifesto.

Again due to the earthquake of 1823, the parish church of S. Antonio Abate, the church of the Senate of Palermo, had been seriously damaged. Therefore, in 1833 the architect of the Senate, Nicolò Raineri (c. 1785–1854), restored it, transforming it into a neo-Gothic church.<sup>59</sup> Its façade was said by Agostino Gallo, a well-known intellectual from Palermo, to be in an Arab-Norman style.<sup>60</sup> Most likely, the intention was to validate the historic tradition of an independent administration for the city, which had existed since the origins of the kingdom, and thus to emphasise independence and autonomy from Bourbon rule.

However, from the other side and in the opposite direction, that is, to emphasise the central power of the Norman kingdom and of the current rulers, the Bourbons sponsored new building works in the main institutional building of the city, the Royal Palace, which was restored in a short time.

Thus, around 1830, under the reign of Ferdinand II of the Two Sicilies, but perhaps already under his predecessor and father, Francis I, new paintings were commissioned for one of the most important rooms of the Royal Palace, the Room of the Sheep, so called because it contained two famous Hellenistic bronze statues of rams, one of which survives in the Museo Salinas in Palermo. The themes chosen were *The*

*Return of the Bishop's Throne to Nicodemus, Muslims Giving Gifts to Roger and Robert* and *The Entrance of Roger and Robert into Palermo*.<sup>61</sup> The last picture had been copied, in my opinion, from the mosaic of Christ entering Jerusalem at the Cappella Palatina (**Fig. 10**).

As monarchical propaganda the paintings were clearly attempting to link the new iconography of the cathedral's apse to the Royal Palace and thus the Norman dynasty to the Bourbon dynasty. Indeed, even in 1832 in *Discorso sulle sagre insegne de' Re di Sicilia* (Discourse on the sacred emblems of the Kings of Sicily), published in Naples, King Ferdinand II was represented dressed as Roger II in the mosaics of the Martorana church.<sup>62</sup> Like Roger II, Ferdinand was presented as the *Defensor Fidei*, defender of the faith, of the Church and of Pope Gregory XVI, with whom he had a strong alliance against the revolutionary Italians.<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, Ferdinand II supported and often visited the restoration works at the cathedral of Monreale, which had been seriously damaged by fire in 1811. The works concluded in 1846 with the reburial of the remains of William I and William II in sarcophagi that were either restored or rebuilt after the devastating disaster.<sup>64</sup>

In 1833 the royal pulpit in the Cappella Palatina was restored in a Gothic style, to represent, as the historian Giovanni Evangelista di Blasi wrote in 1842, 'the ideas of grandeur and of munificence, not only of the founder of Sicilian monarchy, but also of his royal successors'.<sup>65</sup>

This idea of a connection with a past so far away was communicated by a vast programme of restorations to the Royal Palace, which started around 1834–5, at the same time as the completion of the bell tower of the cathedral. The works included the Gothic refurbishment of the tower of Santa Ninfa and of the south-western façades, by the architect Nicolò Puglia (c. 1772–1865), former student of Giuseppe Venanzio Marvuglia, the designer of the royal pulpit,<sup>66</sup> and continued into the early 1840s.

The same architect planned two imposing royal cenotaphs in neo-Gothic style to commemorate the deaths of the Bourbon Kings Ferdinand IV in 1825, and Francis I in 1830, the latter situated inside the Cappella Palatina.<sup>67</sup> This demonstrated a very precise linguistic and political orientation – the Gothic style as equivalent to royal power – and, indeed, these installations were among the very few notable examples of funerary architecture of a medieval style in Palermo.

### The consolidation and spread of the new style

As well as the kings, members of the Palermitan aristocracy who were connected to the court, although they might have been quite liberal and conspiratorial behind closed doors, responded to these projects with a few small masterpieces of their own. In 1834 the new administrator of all the royal properties was the Marquis Carlo Enrico Forcella, son of Antonio Forcella, himself administrator of Francis's estate at Boccadifalco, with its neo-Gothic tower. The young Marquis carried out the restoration of the mosaics of the Cappella Palatina and oversaw the works at the Royal Palace, but at the same time also began building his own new splendid residence to replace the previous one, which had been built in the neoclassical style.<sup>68</sup> This refined intellectual intended to



**Figure 10** Giuseppe Patricolo, *Entrance of Roger and Robert into Palermo, 1830, Sala Gialla, Palazzo Reale di Palermo* (photo: author)

create a palatial residence that was influenced by the main royal palaces. Therefore, he proposed a sequence of medieval monuments: a large salon inspired by the Hall of the Ambassadors at the Alhambra in Granada; a neighbouring room with copies of the mosaics from the Fountain Room of the Norman palace of La Zisa in Palermo (**Fig. 11**); and a little salon where he imitated the ceiling of the so-called Room of Roger at the Royal Palace and into which he inserted his own personal coat of arms.<sup>69</sup> Palazzo Forcella achieved the aims of its founder and its rooms were admired by guests from the highest ranks: in 1844 by the Bourbons, Prince Karl of Prussia and King Ludwig I of Bavaria, and in 1845 by the emperor of Russia, Nicholas I.<sup>70</sup> Ludwig had already been impressed with the neo-Norman mosaics during a first visit in 1842, after which, in a letter to the Duke of Serradifalco, he mentioned Giovanni Battista Giochetti from Bolzano, who had been sent by him to Palermo and to the Marquis Forcella, 'Maestro di questo genere', to 'imparare l'arte del mosaicista . . .'.<sup>71</sup>

The works at Palazzo Forcella were carried out under the guidance of the architects Nicolò Puglia and Emmanuele

**Figure 11** Sala della Zisa, Palazzo Forcella, Palermo, designed by Palermo craftsmen, c. 1832–42 (photo: author)



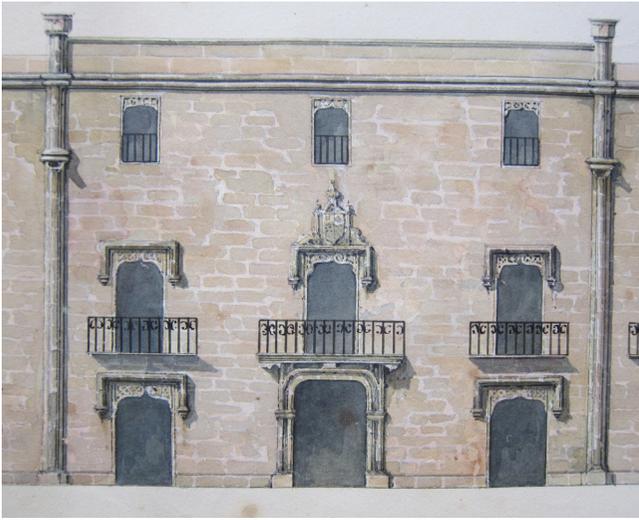


Figure 12 Emmanuele Palazzotto's design of the facade of Palazzo Campofranco (detail), 1835. Archivio Palazzotto, Palermo



Figure 13 Carlo Giachery, Casa Florio (also known as 'I Quattro Pizzi'), Palermo, 1840–4 (photo: author)

Palazzotto;<sup>73</sup> the latter had also been appointed in 1835 by Prince Antonio Lucchesi Palli di Campofranco, Lieutenant General of the King in Sicily, to create a uniform façade for his residence, so that it would appear as an ancient palace, befitting his rank and station.

Palazzotto drew inspiration from the 15th-century Palazzo Abatellis, which had just been published in Paris on the cover of Hittorff and Zanth's *Architecture moderne de la Sicile*. It is interesting to note that, prior to this, the Prince of Campofranco had appointed a different architect to realise a façade in the Empire style,<sup>73</sup> but, evidently aware of the new and more modern taste for the neo-medieval, now chose the architect Palazzotto, who had distinguished himself through his neo-Gothic bell towers on the cathedral (Fig. 12).<sup>74</sup> By the end of 1835, the Duke of Serradifalco, who met had Viollet-le-Duc, had also constructed his own personal Gothic residence,<sup>75</sup> and in 1838 published a very successful volume titled *Del Duomo di Monreale e di altre chiese siculo normanne*.

The year before, in 1837, Alessandro Emmanuele Marvuglia had published an article in the official government newspaper with the title 'Bello Sentimentale dell'Architettura Gotica'. Here he seems to have anticipated the historicism of the second half of the century, admiring the villas of Pignatelli and Serradifalco and mentioning the names of the writers James Fenimore Cooper and Walter Scott, with clearly Romantic views.<sup>76</sup>

Not until 1840 did the rising star in the Sicilian economy, Vincenzo Florio, a humble but extremely rich bourgeois, decide to make an old building by the sea his main residence. He appointed Carlo Giachery (1812–1865),<sup>77</sup> professor at the University of Palermo, to the project, and once again the style that was the most representative of the time was chosen: the neo-Gothic (Fig. 13). The house became so famous that it was visited by the Bourbon kings and, in 1845, by Tsar Nicholas I, who had it copied and replicated at Peterhof.<sup>78</sup>

In short, Palermo became the model for neo-medieval architecture, and in that guise and for a short time almost regained the cultural, if not the political, centrality that it had lost since the legendary reign of the Normans.

## Notes

- 1 About travel in Sicily, see Peik 2006, 16–32.
- 2 About the Grand Tour in Sicily, see Palazzotto 2016, 301–15 (with previous bibliography).
- 3 Boscarino and Giuffrè 1994, 31.
- 4 See Boscarino and Giuffrè 1994, 17–37.
- 5 About the Gothic revival in mainland Italy, see Patetta 1975, 260–310; Bossaglia and Terraroli 1989.
- 6 After all, from 1798 Sicily could almost have been considered a British protectorate that allowed the exile of King Ferdinand IV from Naples because of the pro-French Revolution. See D'Alessandro and Giarrizzo 1992, 611–49.
- 7 About the restoration of Palermo Cathedral, see Boscarino 1993, 93–102; Giuffrè 1993, 255–64.
- 8 Andaloro 1993, 60–2; Andaloro 2006, 558–9; Booms and Higgs 2016, 202–3.
- 9 Giuffrè 1994, 192.
- 10 Trans.: 'making the new elevations from the foundations and with appropriate design'; 'evaluating the preservation of the ancient Gothic exterior ornament'; Basile 1926, docc. I, V, 121, 130. Ferdinando Fuga (1699–1782) was the author of the project implemented by Giuseppe Venanzio Marvuglia and Salvatore Attinelli (1736–1802); Basile 1926, doc. XV, 141; Zanca 1952, 295.
- 11 About G.V. Marvuglia, see Mauro 1993, 290–3 (with previous bibliography); Giuffrè 2004, 285–98; Pessolano and Buccaro 2004; Palazzotto 2007d, 71–80.
- 12 Di Marzo Ferro 1858, 636; Di Bartolo 1903, 26; Zanca 1952, 308–9; Bellafiore 1976, 116.
- 13 About the new cladding, see Giuffrè 2000.
- 14 Palazzotto 2007a, 438–46.
- 15 Palazzotto 2000c, 102–4.
- 16 Trans.: 'remains in part with a Gothic design and partly with a Roman design and it is irregular'; Basile 1926, doc. XI, 134.
- 17 Marco Nobile (Nobile 2002, 371–6) thinks that by the end of the 18th century the interior of the church had very little of the Norman remains due to the 16th- and 17th-century restorations.
- 18 Swinburne 1790, 300–1. Swinburne was very intrigued by Zisa, see 336–7.
- 19 Nobile 2002, 372.
- 20 For instance, Hittorff and Zanth wrote before 1835, after their visit to Palermo around 1822–4, that Marvuglia had tried in vain to

- oppose Fuga's project: 'Charles III [Ferdinand IV] en avait demandé les dessins à Ferdinando Fuga, alors un des architectes les plus célèbres de l'Italie, qui se rendit à cet effet à Palerme. Ce fut aussi conformément au projet de cet artiste que s'exécuta la grande coupole élevée au-dessus de la croix de l'église, et dont la forme et les colonnes corinthiennes présentent une disparate si choquante avec le caractère général de l'édifice. Lors de la discussion de ce projet, Marvuglia et plusieurs autres architectes palermitains s'opposèrent avec force, mais en vain, à son adoption'; Hittorff and Zanth 1835, 46.
- 21 Piazza 2001, 165.
  - 22 Daniele 1784; Tomaselli 1994, 331–4; Andaloro 2002, 139–41; Bruno 2002, 173–86; Poeschke 2011, 49–52.
  - 23 Di Marzo Ferro 1858, 633–4, n. 1. About the importance of Gregory and the description of the royal tombs, see his manuscripts in the Palermo Public Library: Rossi 1873, 295.
  - 24 For the contents of the tombs, cf. Bruno 2002, 178–80.
  - 25 Antonio Zanca (Zanca 1952, 311), believes that the inscription was originally placed above the ancient and destroyed royal throne, but as the headstone is still there, the inscription outside was probably created to reinforce the role of the kings in the cathedral.
  - 26 Piazza 2006, 203.
  - 27 Di Marzo Ferro 1858, 635, n. 1; Cancila 2006, 86, 101.
  - 28 Cancila 2006, 101–3.
  - 29 Zanca 1952, 310–11.
  - 30 Rocco 1983, 43–65.
  - 31 Trans.: 'arranging and cleaning the mausoleums of the kings of Sicily'; Basile 1926, doc. XXIV, 149.
  - 32 For this hypothesis, see Bruno 2002, 180–2.
  - 33 About Gothic revival in Europe, see Patetta 1975, 142–244; Bossaglia and Terraroli 1989; Guyot-Bachy and Moeglin 2015; Brittain-Catlin, De Maeyer and Bressani 2016.
  - 34 Hope 1840, 323.
  - 35 *Ibid.*, 323.
  - 36 Tomaselli 1994, 335.
  - 37 About Dufourny in Sicily, see Dufourny 1991; Giuffrè 2004, 365–72; Raspi Serra 2008, 51–9; 1996. *La Sicilia del '700 nell'opera di Léon Dufourny. L'Orto Botanico di Palermo*; Aurigemma 2015b, 261–76.
  - 38 See Aurigemma 2015a, 141–57.
  - 39 The hypothesis is in Palazzotto 2004, 231.
  - 40 Seroux D'Agincourt 1828, 129.
  - 41 Seroux D'Agincourt 1826–9, 46, cit. by Palazzotto, 1994, 46.
  - 42 Piazza 2006, 203.
  - 43 Cancila 2006, 72.
  - 44 Daniele 1784, XI.
  - 45 Capitano 1989, 53; Piazza 2006, 205.
  - 46 Capitano 1985, 29; Giuffrè 1987, 88.
  - 47 Piazza 2006, 208.
  - 48 *Ibid.*, 208–9.
  - 49 Lo Piccolo 1999, 91.
  - 50 Architect Gaetano Bernasconi worked in the Royal Palace of Carditello, see Serraglio 2018, 18.
  - 51 See Rosselli 1956; Gregory 1988; Mack Smith 2009, 437–61.
  - 52 I put forward this theory for the first time at a seminar organised by the Heritage Office of Trapani Diocese and Erice Museum, *Il Duomo di Erice tra Gotico e Neogotico*, 16 December 2006; see Palazzotto 2008.
  - 53 Mack Smith 2009, 462–89; Riall 2004, 37–73.
  - 54 Boscarino and Giuffrè 1994, 43.
  - 55 Lo Piccolo 1999, 91.
  - 56 Boscarino and Giuffrè 1994, 31; Giuffrè 2000, 152.
  - 57 In 1870 the villa was acquired by the Englishman Sir James Domville, Baron of St Albans, and his son, Admiral Sir William Cecil Henry Domville, who enlarged the house with two lateral wings and lived there for 30 years. See Purpura 2010, 142–4.
  - 58 Palazzotto 2004, 230. See also Barbera and Rotolo 2006, 232–7.
  - 59 Palazzotto 2000a, 100.
  - 60 Palazzotto 2004, 232.
  - 61 Bruno 2006, 72–6.
  - 62 Bruno 2006, 76–7.
  - 63 Di Blasi 1842, 829.
  - 64 Palazzotto 2008, 99.
  - 65 *Ibid.*, 106.
  - 66 Palazzotto 2004, 226–7.
  - 67 Palazzotto 2007b, 62.
  - 68 Chirco and Di Liberto 2002, 55–6.
  - 69 Palazzotto 2004, 227–30.
  - 70 Palazzotto 2007c, 137–8.
  - 71 Trans.: 'Master of the art of mosaic' to 'learn the art of mosaicist'; Cianciolo Cosentino 2006, 246.
  - 72 Di Benedetto 1998, 28.
  - 73 Palazzotto 2000b, 71.
  - 74 Palazzotto 2004, 233–4.
  - 75 See Sessa 1995, 269–77.
  - 76 Palazzotto 2004, 234–5.
  - 77 See Di Benedetto 2011.
  - 78 *Ibid.*, 45–7.

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# Chapter 17

## The Royal Tombs in Palermo Cathedral: Conceptions and Misconceptions

Valeria Sola  
Galleria Regionale della Sicilia di  
Palazzo Abatellis, Palermo

The tombs of the Norman kings of Sicily have been venerated for centuries. While the tombs of William I and William II, displayed in Monreale Cathedral since their deaths, were badly damaged in a devastating fire in 1811 and subsequently heavily restored, the tombs in Palermo Cathedral have survived much better. Like all great cathedrals, the one in Palermo has undergone many vicissitudes and alterations, but the most radical was undoubtedly the so-called ‘restoration’ undertaken in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, characterised by the construction of the dome and the moving of the royal tombs to their present position. This transformation was criticised harshly for its distortion of the internal space, which led also, in addition to the displacement of the royal tombs, to the loss of the *Tribuna*, the multi-storey marble monument situated in the apse. This was a masterpiece made by members of several generations of the Gagini family of sculptors and their collaborators, and long considered, along with the porphyry tombs, to be the pride of the city (**Fig. 1**). The tombs themselves have been the subject of numerous studies.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, rather than focusing on these porphyry sarcophagi themselves, this paper will, mostly through the contemporary, historical sources, discuss the importance of the presence of the tombs in the cathedral of Palermo and the transformations that this royal ‘cemetery’ has suffered, highlighting how the tombs’ significance changed over time.

There are two key sources for understanding the cathedral’s appearance before the 18th century: the rich and detailed (although sometimes not completely reliable) volume by Giovanni Maria Amato, *De Principe Templo Panormitano*, published in Palermo in 1728, and a manuscript by the Canon Antonino Mongitore,<sup>2</sup> from before 1743 (the year of his death), which provides a precise description of the royal ‘cemetery’ and presents careful comparisons between earlier writers and historians.

Four different stages can be distinguished in the history of the royal burials’ location:

1. In the earliest Norman phase, during the reigns of Roger II and William I, members of the royal family were buried in the chapel of St Mary Magdalene;
2. In 1187 a royal ‘cemetery’ was created in the cathedral;
3. This display was restructured by Emperor Frederick II around 1215;
4. The graves were moved and repositioned to their current location and structure at the end of the 18th century.

### The earliest Norman phase

The construction phases of the cathedral in the Norman period, although still heavily debated, were clarified to some extent by restorations undertaken in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the condition of the cathedral under King Roger and the two Williams,<sup>4</sup> it is at least certain that a partial or total renovation of the building was undertaken by Walter (so-called Offamiglia, archbishop of Palermo from 1169 to 1190), through the record of a request that he made to King William II in 1187.

For the first 50 years of the new kingdom, the members of the royal family had been buried in the chapel of St Mary Magdalene, built, according to Amato, in 1130 by the will of Elvira, first wife of King Roger, and richly endowed.<sup>5</sup> Amato

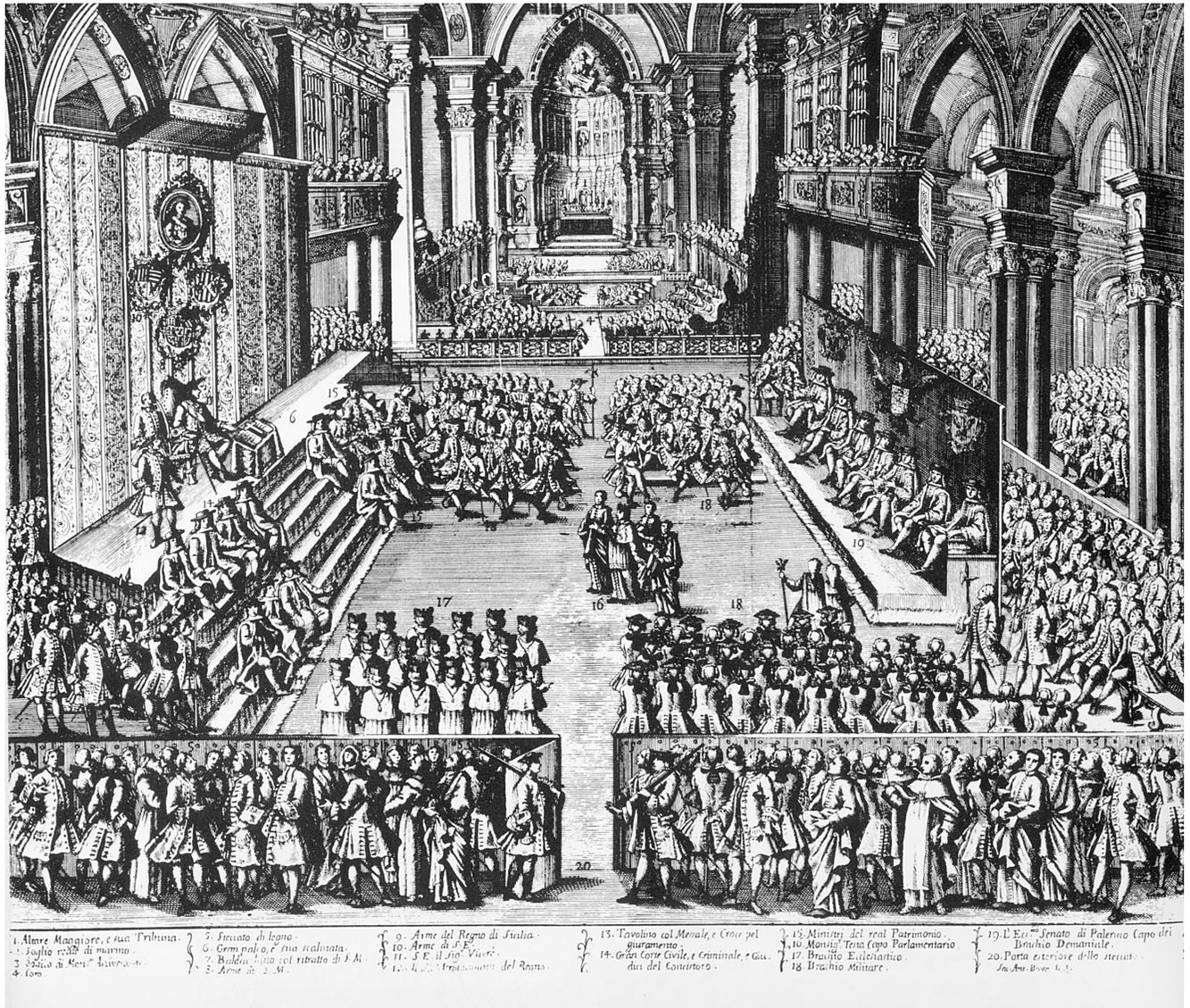


Figure 1 The interior of the old cathedral in a 1760 engraving by Antonino Bova, with Gagini's *Tribuna* visible in the apse (Schiavo 1760)

gives a list of the Norman princes buried there, although it does not seem to entirely correspond to historical reality, as was noted by Mongitore shortly afterwards: for example, the list includes Roger the Great Count, who was actually buried in Mileto, Calabria. Certainly buried in the chapel, however, were King Roger II himself, two of his wives, Elvira and Beatrice, and four of their sons. The chapel of the Magdalene was in fact the first burial site of Roger, despite his wish to be buried in the cathedral of Cefalù, which he had commissioned for that purpose. While it is possible that this church was not yet ready to receive him at the time of his death, it had already been specially equipped, according to a well-known diploma of 1145, with two precious porphyry sarcophagi, one for his body and the other as a cenotaph.<sup>6</sup> Also at the Magdalene chapel were temporarily buried King William I (d. 1166), before his body was transferred to Monreale Cathedral in 1182, and his sons Roger (d. 1161) and Henry (d. 1172), who were transferred to Palermo Cathedral in 1187.<sup>7</sup>

### The creation of a 'royal cemetery'

In 1187 Walter, together with the cathedral's chapter, asked King William II to demolish the chapel of St Mary Magdalene, where the bodies of dukes and queens had been

buried, in order to enlarge the cathedral and to move the precious royal bodies there. The transcription of this request is reported by many authors, including as early as 1633 by Rocco Pirri, a historian of the Sicilian church, who wrote the volume *Sicilia Sacra*, of which a significant part is dedicated to the cathedral of Palermo.<sup>8</sup>

The new arrangement of the tombs in 1187 does not, however, seem to have included William II, who was instead committed to building a family pantheon in the cathedral of Monreale, which he himself had founded (according to some interpretations as a result of conflict with Palermo Cathedral) and had chosen as the place for his burial. In 1182 he had the body of his father, William I, transferred there in a sarcophagus of porphyry similar to the one his grandfather Roger had gifted to Cefalù (Fig. 2), and in 1183 he also buried there his mother Margaret of Navarre and the remains of his brothers Roger and Arrigo.<sup>9</sup>

Roger II's tomb remained in Palermo despite the requests of the cathedral chapter of Cefalù, which in 1172 had already pleaded with William II and his mother Margaret of Navarre to respect King Roger's wishes and have his body moved there.<sup>10</sup> It remains unclear why Roger II, the founder of the dynasty, did not seem to have had his wishes



Figure 2 The tomb of William I in Monreale Cathedral (photo: Enzo Brai)

Figure 3 The tomb of Roger II in Palermo Cathedral I (photo: Enzo Brai)



respected, as would have been expected from his grandson William II, who refused to allow the remains to leave Palermo. If we accept that the arrangement in Palermo Cathedral was mainly due to Archbishop Walter, then it has been proposed that it was also he who ordered the creation of the sarcophagus in which Roger is still deposited today, manufactured from slabs of porphyry, the same precious material used in the tombs of Cefalù and Monreale, although rather less lavish, due to the difficulty in obtaining porphyry at this time (Fig. 3).<sup>11</sup>

A few years later, after the death of William II in 1189, it appears that Palermo Cathedral became the main resting place for the ruling dynasty, rather than Monreale. Rocco Pirri, Giovanni Maria Amato and Antonino Mongitore all claim that Tancred of Lecce was buried in the tomb of his ancestor Roger II, although this has never been verified.<sup>12</sup> It is, however, certain that Costanza d'Altavilla, Roger II's daughter, buried her husband Henry VI there, who had died in Messina. On her own death, on 15 November 1198, her will stated that she also wished to be entombed inside the cathedral, together with her husband, her father and their ancestors, and that masses should be offered to celebrate her soul and those of her ancestors.<sup>13</sup> It was at this point that the cathedral was established as a dynastic burial monument for the Norman rulers.

What remains unclear is why Walter asked the king to move the tombs to the cathedral. It was probably a reaction, in part, to the building of a new cathedral at Monreale by William II, which the latter saw as a dynastic monument. In order to retain some power in Palermo, Walter must have intended to create a counter dynastic monument to the previous generations of rulers.

### Frederick's reorganisation

If this is correct, then the new-found dynastic importance of the cathedral was confirmed by Frederick II's restructuring of the royal cemetery around 1215. Frederick proposed a clear, well-researched project that included a complete renewal of the previous arrangement, with the aim of highlighting and legitimising his descent from the Norman dynasty. To fulfil this project Frederick needed adequate symbols of power: he appropriated the extraordinary porphyry sarcophagi, carved from antique column drums and made even more precious by their porphyry canopies, which had been donated by Roger II to Cefalù for his own burial, but had remained unused (Figs 4–5).<sup>14</sup> The precise date when the precious artefacts were brought to Palermo remains unknown. One author suggests the transfer had happened in 1209, when Frederick was just 15,<sup>15</sup> but it is unlikely that the move was executed, or even planned, before 1213, the year in which Frederick, to prevent resistance to his plan, sent the bishop of Cefalù, Giovanni Cicala, as ambassador to the East, thus taking advantage of his absence to move the sarcophagi.<sup>16</sup> His deception is mentioned by many sources.<sup>17</sup> In September 1215 the emperor donated to the church of Cefalù the fief of the Kalura as compensation and to put an end to the dispute. By this date, his plan had been completed.

It is no coincidence that, during these three years, Frederick, despite his young age (he was around 19 to 21

years old), turned his attention to the Sicilian dynastic tombs. In December 1213 he had transferred the remains of his uncle Philip, emperor of Germany (d. 1208), from the cathedral of Bamberg to that of Speyer, where the emperors of the Salian dynasty were already buried, as well as his grandmother Beatrice of Burgundy, wife of Frederick Barbarossa. In 1215 the emperor enshrined the remains of Charlemagne (who had been canonised by Barbarossa) in Aachen in a precious shrine, giving proper burial to the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the West. These were the years of Frederick's consolidation of power in Germany: on 9 December 1212 Frederick was crowned king of Germany in Mainz Cathedral by Archbishop Siegfried II, and on 25 July 1215, just two days before the ceremony of the translation of the relics of Charlemagne, he was anointed, crowned and enthroned in the collegiate church of S. Maria in Aachen, by the same Siegfried.

This extended period of time in Germany meant, of course, that the execution of the plans in Sicily was carried out while Frederick was *in absentia*, and it is likely that in Palermo the work was overseen by Bernardo Castaca, loyal to Frederick and appointed by him archbishop of Palermo in September 1213.

There are many descriptions of the royal 'cemetery' that Frederick established in the right-hand transept of the cathedral, opposite the cemetery of the archbishops or of All Saints in the left-hand transept (Fig. 6). It could be accessed via three marble steps down from the chapel of the SS. Sacramento, which was to the right of the main altar. Here the four porphyry sarcophagi were placed: the first on the right was that of Roger II; the first on the left, of Frederick himself; then followed Frederick's parents: behind himself, Henry VI, and behind Roger, Constance of Altavilla. In addition, the reused Roman white marble sarcophagus of Constance of Aragon, Frederick's first wife, was placed against the wall to the left of Frederick, and in the 14th century the sarcophagus of William II, Duke of Athens (d. 1338), son of King Frederick III of Sicily and brother of King Peter II of Sicily, was added against the wall to the left of Henry VI.<sup>18</sup>

Frederick reserved for himself the most precious sarcophagus from Cefalù; the other one, originally intended to be kept empty as a cenotaph, was used to house the remains of Henry VI, who until then must have had a temporary tomb. His grandfather Roger was probably still lying in the one in which he had been deposed in 1187 following Archbishop Walter's reconfiguration, while the sarcophagus of his mother Constance was probably specially built in imitation of that of Henry.<sup>19</sup> These latter two were also endowed with lavish canopies in white marble and decorated with mosaics. In 1538 the names and titles of the buried princes and queens, composed in Latin verse by Canon Roger Paruta, were painted on the canopies, and engraved on marble slabs around 1630 or 1632, as can be seen in some of the early drawings.<sup>20</sup>

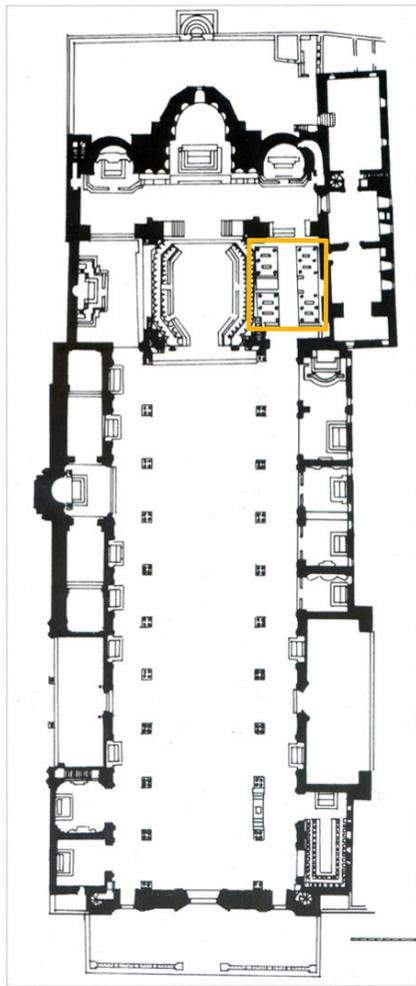
The whole layout seems to commemorate Frederick's Norman descent. In Palermo the emperor presented himself as the king of Sicily: he reserved the place of honour on the right for his grandfather Roger II, the founder, and allocated to himself the second most important position, the first on



Figure 4 The tomb of Henry VI in Palermo Cathedral I (photo: Enzo Brai)

Figure 5 The tomb of Frederick II in Palermo Cathedral I (photo: Enzo Brai)





**Figure 6** The position of the royal cemetery in the old cathedral (adapted from Zanca 1952, 17, fig. 2)

the left. He and Roger would thus be side by side, and behind them were his parents, Constance and Henry VI. When Constance of Aragon died in Catania in 1222, she was buried near the place that the emperor had chosen for himself, which did not change the original arrangement of the four tombs, but evidently slightly expanded the ‘cemetery’. It is not known to where the tombs of earlier princes and queens were moved, such as those of Roger’s and William I’s children. In Frederick’s design, only his direct ancestors gained visibility in the main chapel. When he died in 1250, his son Manfred together with the faithful Archbishop Bernardo Castaca arranged for his burial in the porphyry tomb he had chosen, so that in 1258 Manfred was crowned in Palermo Cathedral in the presence of several generations of his illustrious ancestors.

The royal cemetery did not change substantially for more than five centuries. After the addition of the tomb of William II to the chapel, it appears that the bodies of Peter II of Aragon (d. 1342) and of an unidentified woman were laid in the tomb of Frederick.<sup>21</sup> Both William and Peter were descendants of the emperor through his granddaughter Constance, daughter of Manfred, which explains their presence in the Palermo cemetery.

The royal tombs were clearly well maintained and venerated, and endowed the cathedral with the status of an imperial basilica: Giovanni di Paternò, archbishop of Palermo from 1489 to 1511, noted that only the king and the princes could be baptised, married or buried there, privileges that the cathedral of Messina did not enjoy, and

which were confirmed, the archbishop wrote, by the presence of the porphyry monuments brought there from distant regions.<sup>22</sup>

In 1489, the same year that Paternò was appointed archbishop of Palermo, King Ferdinand ‘the Catholic’ sent a fellow Castillian, Ferdinand Acugna, as viceroy to Sicily. The latter, perhaps drawn by macabre curiosity or the desire to look for treasure, decided to open the precious sarcophagi. These openings, on 15 October 1491, were recorded in the Acts of the City Senate and were later described by the historian Thomas Fazello, who recounts that in the presence of Paternò, Pietro de Luna (the archbishop of Messina), the Palermo senate and the elders of the city, first the sarcophagus of Constance of Aragon was opened, followed by that of Henry VI. Constance was found with an inscribed medallion on her chest and the – now famous – crown on her head, as well as a gold necklace with precious stones and pearls and five rings with precious stones, all of which were removed from the sarcophagus and taken into the treasury of the cathedral.

Fazello also recounts how the viceroy wanted to open the other tombs, but ‘there arose among the assisting gentlemen a great buzz, saying that he should not dare them to open the tombs only to appease his curiosity; so he did not proceed further’, and that King Ferdinand ‘did not like the idea’.<sup>23</sup> In May 1492 Pietro Bologna, who was in charge of the Maramma of the cathedral (the council responsible for building works at the cathedral), reburied the crown and other objects in the sarcophagus of Constance, which then remained closed for three more centuries.<sup>24</sup>

During this period the royal cemetery continued to be mentioned by local historians, clerical and otherwise, but also by many travellers and geographers, as its fame started to spread further afield.<sup>25</sup> To local pride can be ascribed the mention by Mongitore of a now-lost manuscript by a 16th-century monk from Trapani, Bernardo Riera, which claimed that the tombs of Palermo had no equal in the Christian world, not in Saint-Denis, where the Frankish kings were buried, nor in Speyer. However, one Spanish nobleman, Diego Ortiz de Urizar, proposed to move the porphyry sarcophagi to Spain in order to augment further the magnificence of the Monasterio del Escorial, a proposal upon which Philip II thankfully did not act, so as to not deprive Sicily and, presumably, to prevent serious discontent among his Sicilian subjects.<sup>26</sup>

### **The opening of the tombs and the creation of a new ‘cemetery’**

By the first half of the 18th century, the increasingly keen interest in the cathedral of Palermo can be shown by the publication of the previously mentioned volume by Giovanni Maria Amato in 1728 and by the preparation of the manuscript by Mongitore, even though it was never printed. At this time, many people began to regard the interior of the cathedral as incoherent, and unresponsive to the classical taste for symmetry and order imposed by the late baroque. An intervention that would lead to a unified and harmonious space, appropriate to the importance of the building, was hoped for and desired. At the same time, structural problems necessitated construction works. In 1767

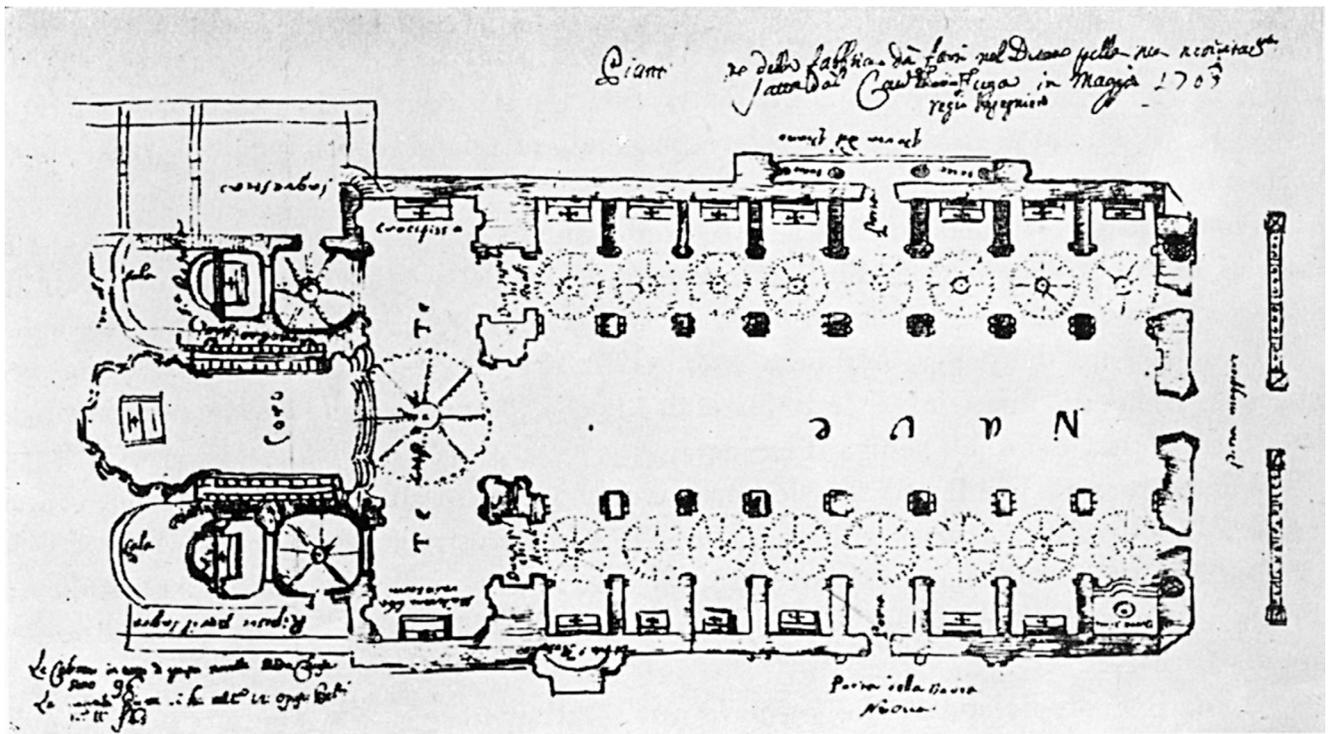
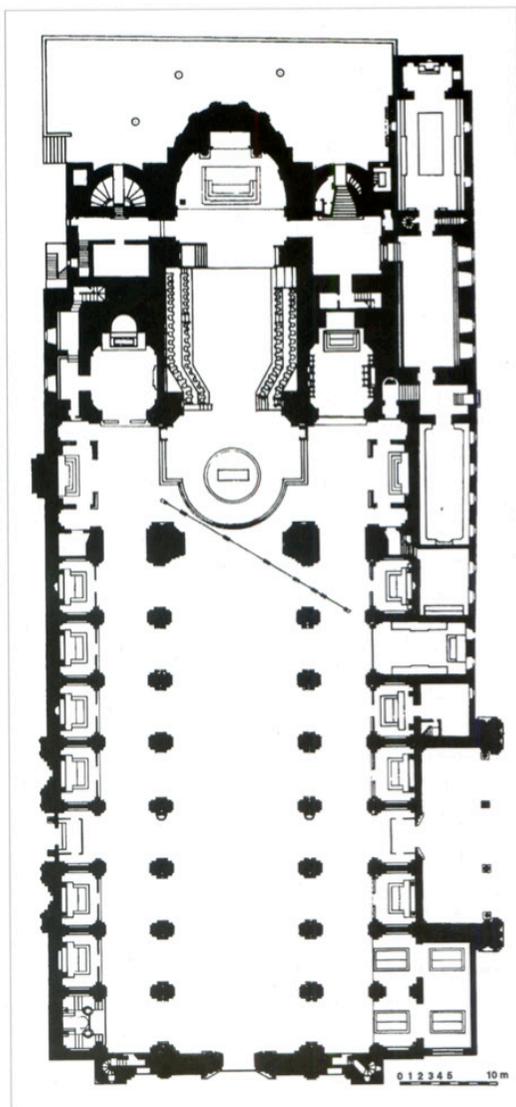


Figure 7 (above) Sketch of Ferdinando Fuga's design, made by the Marquis of Villabianca (adapted from Zanca 1952, 80, fig. 21); (below) actual plan of the constructed cathedral (adapted from Zanca 1952, 27, fig. 6)



Bishop Seraphino Filangeri wrote to Marquis Tanucci, King Ferdinand I's prime minister, asking for a 'restoration' of the cathedral, including a specific request to enlist the royal architect Ferdinando Fuga, who was working for Charles of Bourbon in Naples, as, according to Filangeri, there were no sufficiently suitable architects in Sicily.

Fuga proposed a total renovation of the interior space, eliminating or modifying those decorations that did not respond to the spirit of the project, along with the construction of a dome.<sup>27</sup> As this 'restoration' is discussed in Pierfrancesco Palazzotto's paper in this volume, I shall mention only that the expensive project drawn up by Fuga, which included a marble cladding in the Roman style, was not undertaken until 1781 for financial reasons, and to further reduce the costs, radical changes were made even to that design, as can be seen when comparing the plans of the old and the new cathedral (Fig. 7). Fuga had designed a new chapel to Santa Rosalia, Palermo's patron saint, for next to the choir, which meant that it was necessary to move the royal tombs. It was proposed to close the two existing arcades on the north and south sides to provide shelter for the sarcophagi throughout the works.<sup>28</sup> To lighten the sarcophagi during transport, their lids were removed in the summer of 1781, and over the next few years the contents were carefully inspected and studied with an approach that for the first time could be called scientific. This signalled a drastic change from their original function in the times of Frederick II or of Viceroy Acugna; instead, they were now treated as precious historical documents.

Many testimonies and descriptions of this exceptional event survive, among the most eminent being those of the academic Francesco Maria Gaetani Marchese Villabianca and the antiquarians Prince Torremuzza and Rosario Gregorio. The court in Naples was kept informed of all



**Figure 8** Image of the body of Frederick II (Daniele 1784)

operations and developments.<sup>29</sup> Prince Torremuzza, a skilled archaeologist, asked two German scholars, Theophilus Christoph Murr and Olaus Tychsen, to decipher the inscriptions in Kufic script found on fragments of textiles and on a precious stone in Constance's crown. Torremuzza also proposed to the court that analytical reports should be compiled. Hence, meticulous research of historical sources was begun in order to reconstruct the history of the tombs; Rosario Gregorio wrote a *Relazione dei cadaveri regali osservati*; and Santo Cardini, the director of the Opera dei Mosaici of the Palatine Chapel, with Camillo Manganaro, produced sketches of the objects discovered, which were subsequently engraved by Melchiorre di Bella. All this research was sent to the royal historian in Naples, Francesco Daniele, who composed *I regali sepolcri del Duomo di Palermo riconosciuti e illustrate*, which was published in Naples by the Royal Printing House in 1784 (**Fig. 8**).<sup>30</sup>

The funerary jewellery of Constance of Aragon, which was the richest, was carefully described, removed and once again placed in the cathedral's treasury. When compared to the survey of 1491, it is thought that two of the rings, as well

as the necklace, were missing, although 'remains of variously wrought jewels' are mentioned in the records. Of the precious textiles discovered in the tomb of Henry VI – the mitre, the gloves and lappets – and subsequently dispersed on the antiques market in the 19th century, fragments reached the British Museum in 1878. They were easy to identify, as a fragment of the mantle in the same pattern as the one in the British Museum is also still preserved in Palermo, and because the textiles and patterns were depicted in Daniele's volume.<sup>31</sup>

Ferdinando Fuga had planned to relocate the porphyry tombs in four niches lavishly decorated with marble and cut out of the large pillars at the end of the nave, two in front of the chapel of the Sacrament and two in front of the chapel of St Rosalia. It is unknown which tomb was going to go where, but it is clear from Fuga's design that the royal 'cemetery' no longer possessed its own identity and that the tombs were treated as mere pieces of furniture, even though, as we have seen, their importance was still recognised. For instance, the project included only the porphyry tombs, not the sarcophagus of Constance of Aragon. It is most likely that this was meant to be moved to the cathedral's crypt, where the sarcophagi of the archbishops were, and still are, located. However, as mentioned, Fuga's project was never accomplished: the pillars were narrowed by the new architects, Venanzio Marvuglia and Salvatore Attinelli, and it was no longer possible to cut out sufficient space for tombs within them.<sup>32</sup> Subsequently, Marvuglia proposed building a small chapel behind the high altar of the new cathedral for the sarcophagi, using materials from the Gagini family's marble altarpiece. This proposal was reported in the diary of the French architect Léon Dufourny, but if at first Dufourny described the Norman tombs as 'beautiful', he later commented that, apart from the stone from which they are made, there was nothing remarkable about them.<sup>33</sup> It seems that, just as the style of the church was deemed unpleasing for this new age, so the medieval appearance of the tombs was unappreciated, and this probably influenced the proposals, first to confine the tombs to a separate space, and then to the first two chapels on the south aisle (which were differently organised from today). When, on 14 April 1798, the marquis of Villabianca visited the construction site of the cathedral, he was appalled by the situation: the tombs were placed in those first chapels of the nave, but arranged in a row, like beds in an infirmary, and too close to the altars, in a narrow and dark space. Villabianca protested strongly, now regretting that Fuga's original solution had not been followed, as this would have given full visibility to all the tombs. In his opinion, the 'royal basilica' should have celebrated the presence of the sarcophagi, not hidden them, drawing on comparisons with the imperial burial sites of Saint-Denis and Speyer.<sup>34</sup> Villabianca proposed that the tombs should either be placed in a purpose-built room against the north wall, or two by two in the northern and southern arcades, where they would be more visible. A meeting was convened, hosted by Prince Torremuzza, during which it was decided to double the depth of the chapels where the tombs were already located, and to arrange them in the way that remains to this day.<sup>35</sup>

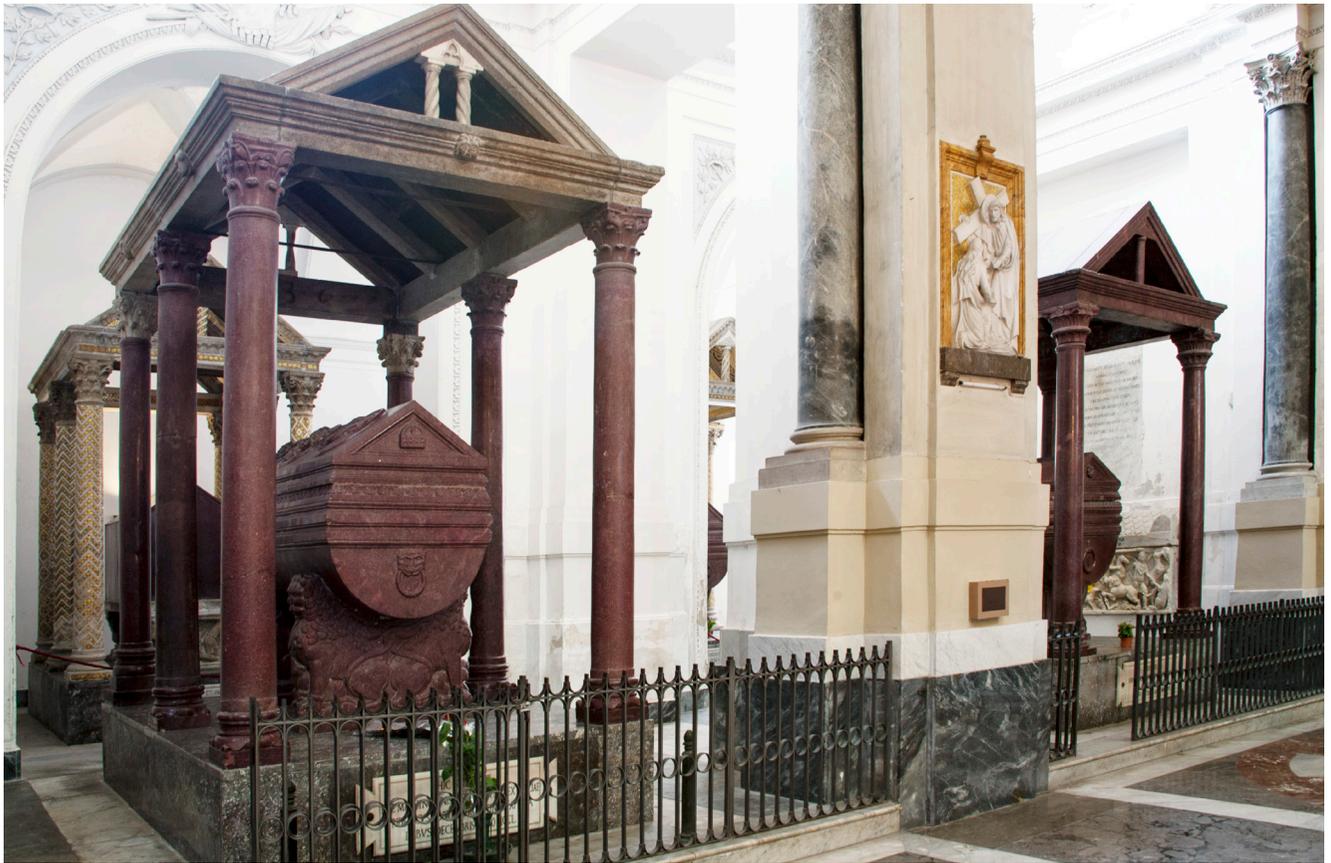


Figure 9 Current placement of the royal tombs in Palermo Cathedral I (photo: Enzo Brai)

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the tombs' ultimate location was not adopted because of Frederick II's plans (from which it was changed anyway), but simply for aesthetic reasons: Frederick II and Henry VI's sarcophagi were made the most visible because they are the richest and most ornate, with porphyry canopies. The less ornate tombs of Roger and Constance of Hauteville were placed in the second row. The reused Roman sarcophagus of Constance of Aragon was now set against the wall on the right, separated from Frederick's and instead close to Henry VI's (Fig. 9).

By this time the days of Palermo's cathedral being an imperial church or of the city hosting a sumptuous royal court were over. It appears that it was no longer necessary to legitimise rulers and kings by giving the tombs of their ancestors a prestigious position close to the main altar. The cathedral had lost any political connotation, retaining only its liturgical function. The sarcophagi, relics of a bygone era, were thus relegated to a second-best solution, which to the uninformed visitor fails to convey the role and the significance of the former royal cemetery.

## Notes

- 1 It is not possible to give here a full bibliography about this subject, but extensive bibliographies may be found in Deér 1959, or Gandolfo 1993, 231–53 and Andaloro *et al.* 2002. Among the most recent publications, see Poeschke 2011.
- 2 Amato 1728, and Mongitore n.d. Significant parts are transcribed and reported in Sola 2002, 151–72.
- 3 See Meli 2001, 51–93. See also Urbani 1993.
- 4 On the site of the cathedral stood originally a Roman basilica, which had been turned into a church in Byzantine times, converted into a mosque during the Arab period, and re-converted to a church in the earliest Norman period. Because of the heavy restructuring and restorations of the subsequent centuries, details of these buildings in those periods remain largely unknown.
- 5 Amato 1728, liber quartus, caput septimum (also in *Il tempio dei Re*; see also Mongitore, n.d., c.353v, in Sola 2002, 159).
- 6 Pirri 1733, vol. 1, col. 103.
- 7 Amato 1728, liber tertius, caput decimum (Mongitore, n.d., c.354v–356r, in Sola 2002, 160–1).
- 8 Pirri 1733, vol. 1, col. 111–12.
- 9 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 461.
- 10 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 800.
- 11 Gandolfo, 1993; see also Bassan 1995a, vol. 2, 45.
- 12 See the exhaustive list of buried princes and princesses in Mongitore, n.d., c.354v–356r, reported also in Sola 2002, 159–60.
- 13 Reported in Pirri 1733, vol. 1, col. 117.
- 14 See Andaloro 2002, 135–47.
- 15 Mongitore, n.d., c.342v.
- 16 Pirri 1733, vol. 2, 805.
- 17 Among these Fazello 1558, 199; Amato 1728, col. CLXI; Pirri 1733, 805; Mongitore, n.d.. The first mention, however, seems to be in Rollus Rubeus: see Poeschke 2011, 33.
- 18 The most precise description is in Mongitore, c.342r and ff. (transcription in Sola 2002, 156–63).
- 19 Gandolfo 1993; Bassan 1995b, 33–45.
- 20 A drawing sent by Diego Ortiz in Spain is reproduced in Catalano 1965–6, 179–90. See also La Duca 2002, 303–13. Described and reported by Mongitore, c.343v ff., and see f. 357r reported in Sola 2002, 161.
- 21 For a thorough *examination*, see La Duca 2002.

- 22 *Allegationes Ill. Rev. Ioannis De Paternione catanensis Archiepiscopi Panormitani De primatu Urbis et Ecclesiae Panormitanae, nunc primum in lucem prodeunt, Palermo 1737*, ed. by Mongitore, n.d., 23 (in Sola 2002, 170).
- 23 Fazello 1558, opp. 594–5, and ‘Libri del Senato’ reported by Mongitore. See also Pirri 1733, vol. 1, col. 183–4.
- 24 *Atti del Senato*, reported by Amato 1728, liber decimus, caput tertium (reprint 2001, 167).
- 25 Mongitore offers an accurate anthology of reports of travellers and historians such as Leon Battista Alberti, Giorgio Gualtiero, Mario Arezio and Jerónimo Zurita. See also Cafarelli 2002, 316–40.
- 26 Catalano 1965–6, 179–90.
- 27 See Cantone 1993, 141–55; and also Basile 1926; Bruno 2002, 173–86.
- 28 Emanuele and Di Villabianca 1880. See also Emanuele and Di Villabianca 1798, reported by Bruno 2002, 173–86, which is a precious contemporary source and describes every step undertaken.
- 29 See Bruno 2002, 173–4.
- 30 Daniele based his book upon Gregorio’s and Cardini’s work: see Bruno 2002, 175–8.
- 31 Guastella 1995, 59–62.
- 32 Bruno 2002, 180–1.
- 33 Duforny 1991, 100.
- 34 Emanuele and Di Villabianca 1798, 236–46, reported by Bruno 2002, 181; also in Basile 1926.
- 35 Bruno 2002.

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# Chapter 18

## The Masi Chapel: A Case of Sicilian- Norman Revival

Maurizia Onori  
PhD at SOAS University of London

### Introduction

This paper considers the Masi chapel, located in Sant'Orsola cemetery in Palermo, which was built at the beginning of the 20th century. The design of the chapel is of particular interest because it is a clear example of Norman revival architecture on the island. In fact, its plan, architecture and decoration imitate those of a specific group of monuments built in Sicily under the Norman rulers (12th century), indicating that the chapel was part of the Sicilian Norman revival period.<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon of Norman revival architecture in Sicily has been largely ignored to date. However, Franco Tomaselli, one of the foremost scholars of 19th-century Norman architecture, although focusing mostly on the conservation of the monuments,<sup>2</sup> explained the rediscovery of Sicily's golden age through a blossoming culture of historical studies and restoration, which re-established a national pride and presented the populace with a culture with which they could identify. Parallel to and as part of this Norman reawakening, Sicily also rediscovered its Islamic and Byzantine roots: the typical hybrid Sicilian-Norman architecture remains the most visible and palpable survival of the Islamic and Byzantine presences and influences in medieval Sicily. The presence of these 'exotic' elements in medieval Sicilian architecture suggests that this hybrid style was at one point the prevalent model for Sicilian architects who wished to participate in the 'Orientalist' trend, which was popular throughout Europe during this period.

As well as the Masi chapel, there is a large group of chapels found in several of Palermo's most important cemeteries that enriched the city's late 19th- and early 20th-century historic framework. These funerary structures are one manifestation of how the renaissance of the Norman period was reflected in architecture. An investigation into these chapels has demonstrated that, through a micro-history of small-scale architecture, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-political and cultural dynamics of this time. It also showed that the reasons behind the choice of a specific 'style' in this architectural revival were the result of a strong connection on the part of both patrons and architects with this architectonic language rather than it being a fashionable whim. This study takes into account myriad sources, including archival documents, contemporary publications and journals, biographies of the main characters, and a close investigation of the chapel through surveys and photographic campaigns. In the case of the Masi chapel, the shortage of archival documents was offset by the availability of bibliographic data from private and public archives and by consultation with living members of the Masi family.

### Orientalism and architecture in Sicily

Orientalism remains a hotly debated term within modern historiography. Used initially to describe Orientalist painters, it was extended to European artists, particularly those of the 19th century, who used Eastern themes as the starting-point for their work. Yet, 'Oriental' is traditionally regarded as a 'vague term', and academics have stressed that it reflects the failure of many 18th-century Europeans to distinguish between the numerous civilisations of the East.<sup>3</sup>

In common with other European countries, Italy's interest in the East was not limited to a phenomenon that started in the 18th century. In fact, it manifested itself at different times and in different ways, and at each point the reasons for Western interest in the East were varied.<sup>4</sup> Professor M.V. Fontana analyses the Italian context by dividing it into three chronological periods – the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Modern Age – within which contact with Islamic art on the Italian peninsula has produced a variety of products, classified as 'influenced', 'inspired' and 'imitated or articulate copy' respectively.

Although in the 18th and 19th centuries Orientalism was not entirely new, its manifestation in architecture was particularly characteristic of this epoch. Initially, Orientalist architecture was dependent on European cultural influences, especially those from Britain and France. It was only at the end of the 19th century that Italy generated a series of new experiments, mainly based on the ideas of engineers, architects and workers active in the Ottoman Empire.

The models and sources that reached Italy at the beginning of the 19th century included paintings, architectural treatises, pattern books, travel books and manuals, among which some of the more important were: the paintings of Thomas and William Daniell for Islamic India; the drawing and pattern books compiled by Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey<sup>5</sup> and Owen Jones<sup>6</sup> for the Moorish style; and those compiled by Pascal Coste<sup>7</sup> and Achille Constant Théodore Emile Prisse d'Avennes<sup>8</sup> for Cairo. The rapid diffusion of photography played an important role in making these sources more readily available. The proliferation of new publications is confirmation of the popularity of Orientalist architecture throughout Europe. While initially reaching only the upper classes and aristocratic collectors, at a later stage a larger part of the population became attracted to the idea. A crucial role was played by universal exhibitions, where Islamic countries were represented through their national pavilions, and where European architects designed neighbourhoods and villages, combining both spectacle and archaeological rigour in their scaled-down replicas of famous monuments.<sup>9</sup> These, together with the associated international press and publications, disseminated knowledge on this new style of architecture. Relevant and linked to this phenomenon was the attribution in the 19th century of specific styles to particular building types,<sup>10</sup> such as the Egyptian style for cemeteries, the classical style for civil buildings and the Gothic style for churches. The neo-Islamic style is often referred to as 'exotic' or, using the words of John Sweetman, the 'architecture of relaxation',<sup>11</sup> as it was mainly used for seaside homes, hotels, greenhouses and ephemeral architecture such as exhibition buildings or kiosks. It is this common connection between the neo-Islamic style and building type that raises the question of whether such a revival can still be considered as just exotic or the 'architecture of relaxation' when applied to funerary architecture.

### Historical background

To appreciate the importance of this architectural revival, it is necessary to consider both the historical context in which

the Masi chapel and similar buildings were produced, and the contemporary perception of their architectural style. One aspect debated since the 19th century that clearly reflected the ideas around this particular style was the issue of what name to give it. On the 600th anniversary of the Sicilian Vespers, Giovanni Battista Filippo Basile (1825–1891) published an article about the Norman church of Santo Spirito, describing its style as follows:

La Sicilia, situata nel centro del Mediterraneo, volgente una spiaggia alla Grecia, un'altra al continente ed una terza all'Africa, nella miscela dei due stili romanesco e bizantino dovea accogliere l'elemento arabo, e questi tre stili fusi insieme diedero origine ad un'architettura, che spiega chiaramente le varie influenze, alle quali soggiacque il movimento artistico dell'isola.<sup>12</sup>

Lo stile generale architettonico è di quell'arte medievale della Sicilia, che fu ben definita romano-bizantina-arabo-normanno-sicula.<sup>13</sup>

Basile is a key figure in Sicilian architecture of the 19th century. His influence can be traced in cultural circles, in his university teaching and in his wide-ranging projects, both those that were built and those that remained on paper. When teaching and throughout his professional practice, history and the study of new materials were the cornerstones of his approach. In his description above, Basile recognises the different elements that comprise the architecture of medieval Sicily, but also the style's uniformity. However, he used Camillo Boito's term 'Sicilian-Roman-Byzantine-Arab-Norman', which indicates the difficulty of describing the style in the 19th century. Boito listed the different labels given to 12th-century Sicilian architecture by his contemporaries, such as Siculo-Norman, Sicilian Arab art, Siculo-Byzantine, Arab-Greek, Arabo-Norman, Byzantine, Norman, Gothic, ogival.<sup>14</sup> He suggested that all these definitions could be acceptable as long as they were intended to reference a particular influence without excluding the others. While he stated that the most comprehensive definition in his opinion was the one used by Basile, he nevertheless found it to be unsatisfactory and eventually opted for 'Sicilian Art of the Middle Ages'.

The impressive buildings dating to the Norman period were constructed for and by rulers who could afford to attract the best artists and craftsmen from the different cultural groups living in Sicily at the time. They created a new formal language that reflected the prosperity of the period perfectly, an architecture that was able to 'speak' Greek, Arabic and Latin: the architecture itself was writing history.

### Norman revival

In Sicily the Norman revival recurred cyclically during the island's architectural history. In fact, it appeared as early as the 14th century and previous studies have shown that this particular revival lasted for almost two centuries.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the Norman-inspired Sicilian architectural language that resurfaced in the 19th and 20th centuries was certainly not historically unique. However, what was unique in this period were the motivations and the historical conditions that generated the resumption of this revival, which were closely linked to the social, cultural and scientific

changes that were occurring throughout Europe in the 18th century, and in which Sicily played an active role.

Through characters of great charisma and profound knowledge, Sicily played a leading role in several fields, from geological and botanical investigations to historical and architectural studies. The island was more than an appendage to Europe's periphery; it was at the centre of a major thoroughfare, in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, and therefore crucial to this commercial and cultural route.

The revival of Norman architecture in this period can be considered the result of a chain reaction and a claiming of regional identity. Its beginnings can be identified as early as the 18th century with the first studies focusing on both the Islamic and Norman Middle Ages. Thanks to influential individuals, local and otherwise, such as Domenico Antonio Lo Faso Pietrasanta, Duke of Serradifalco (1783–1863)<sup>16</sup> and Lèon Dufourny (1754–1818),<sup>17</sup> developments in the revival reached an international audience. Continued in the 19th century by historian Michele Amari (1806–1889),<sup>18</sup> on the one hand, and by architects and engineers such as G.B.F. Basile (1825–1891),<sup>19</sup> on the other, the revival became the emblem of political propaganda and cultural emancipation. Therefore, the rediscovery and re-evaluation of this heritage generated a need to maintain such monuments and make them accessible to everyone. Architect Giuseppe Patricolo (1834–1905) was the protagonist of a large-scale restoration campaign, and although he was subsequently strongly criticised for his conservation methodology, he did at least engender a deep understanding of these monuments, and revealed the techniques behind their construction. The conservation work would not have been possible without the skilled craftsmen capable of replacing the missing elements and re-creating extremely difficult technical and architectural solutions. While Patricolo seemed to have a natural tendency to want to re-create a style of architecture that was the symbol of Sicily's golden age, he also demonstrated excellent skills and historical knowledge of 19th-century Sicilian culture.

A key event that stimulated the revival of Orientalism was the IV National Italian Exhibition of Arts and Industries held in Palermo in 1891–2. It represented a crucial moment in the city's modern history, marking the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. This was a short, intense episode in the city's development, characterised by the revolutionary changes that arose in the Bourbon era (1734–1860) and which continued through the period of Italian unification (1860–1). The exhibition involved all echelons of society and focused on cultural, political, economic and artistic change. It told the story of a region proud of its roots and able to present itself to both Italian and European contexts. For the exhibition, the brilliant architect Ernesto Basile, son of G.B.F. Basile, created a spectacular building in tribute to the local architectural formal language, which provided inspiration for other buildings in the style. Contemporary descriptions of the pavilions point out how the fantastic ephemeral exhibition structures produced an overall Oriental atmosphere (**Fig. 1**), but at the same time they recognised the references to the Sicilian-Norman period.<sup>20</sup> If the restored Norman monuments were the

inspiration for the Masi chapel and others, then the Palermo National Exhibition was stimulus for this phenomenon of revival on a larger scale.

Moreover, in the art pavilion dedicated to Sicilian monuments, Nicolò Rutelli<sup>21</sup> presented four faithful reconstructions of medieval buildings (**Fig. 2**), each accompanied by a booklet that explained the techniques, materials and tools used for their realisation. Extraordinarily, for that time, he insisted the booklets were printed in three different languages: Italian, English and French. The English version states that:

the second fac-simile, half the size of the original, . . . represents one of the corbellings (or pendentives) of the cupola of the Church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti at Palermo with window tracery and part of the vault – all of the 12th century . . . the whole work is made of small cut stones placed entirely without mortar.

This last statement emphasises, for an expert, the high quality of the dressed stone because only impeccably accurate craftsmanship allows the setting of single pieces in place without mortar, as each face of each block must be geometrically perfect to match the faces of the other blocks. At the very end he added:

the four fac-similes have been made with the instruments and tools exhibited and described in the fifth table, and are the same as those used by the Greeks and used at Palermo to the present day . . . All the pieces composing the several fac-similes will have a drawing attached in order to facilitate their being mounted. Reproduction can be made for intending purchasers at prices to be agreed upon . . .<sup>22</sup>

The Masi chapel is a good example of the use of such a facsimile or model.

Although the 19th century has always been considered an exciting period, with innovation, experimentation and renewal in the political, cultural and economic spheres, Antonio Samonà, a scholar of 19th- and 20th-century Sicily, raised the issue that until recently its architecture has not been considered a driving force in these areas.<sup>23</sup> This is largely due to the fact that architectural studies have ignored the close link between buildings and their political history. Through the case study of small-scale funerary architecture, I will attempt to illustrate Samonà's hypothesis.<sup>24</sup>

### The chapel

Fifteen Norman revival-style chapels have been identified to date, located in different cemeteries and cities around Sicily. They can be classified as domed chapels of 'Sicilian-Norman' inspiration. There is a significant concentration in the cemetery of Santo Spirito in Palermo, which houses five of them. Reliable information on these buildings comes from archival documents (although sometimes limited and accessible only with difficulty), journals and contemporary publications. The richest historic period for the production of this type of chapel falls in the first half of the 20th century. Their fundamental typological structure consists of a square base surmounted by a hemispherical dome, which is sometimes raised. The solution for the zone of transition between the square base and the circular dome was through pendentives or squinches. The hemispherical dome, sometimes red, sometimes of a dark colour, makes them easy

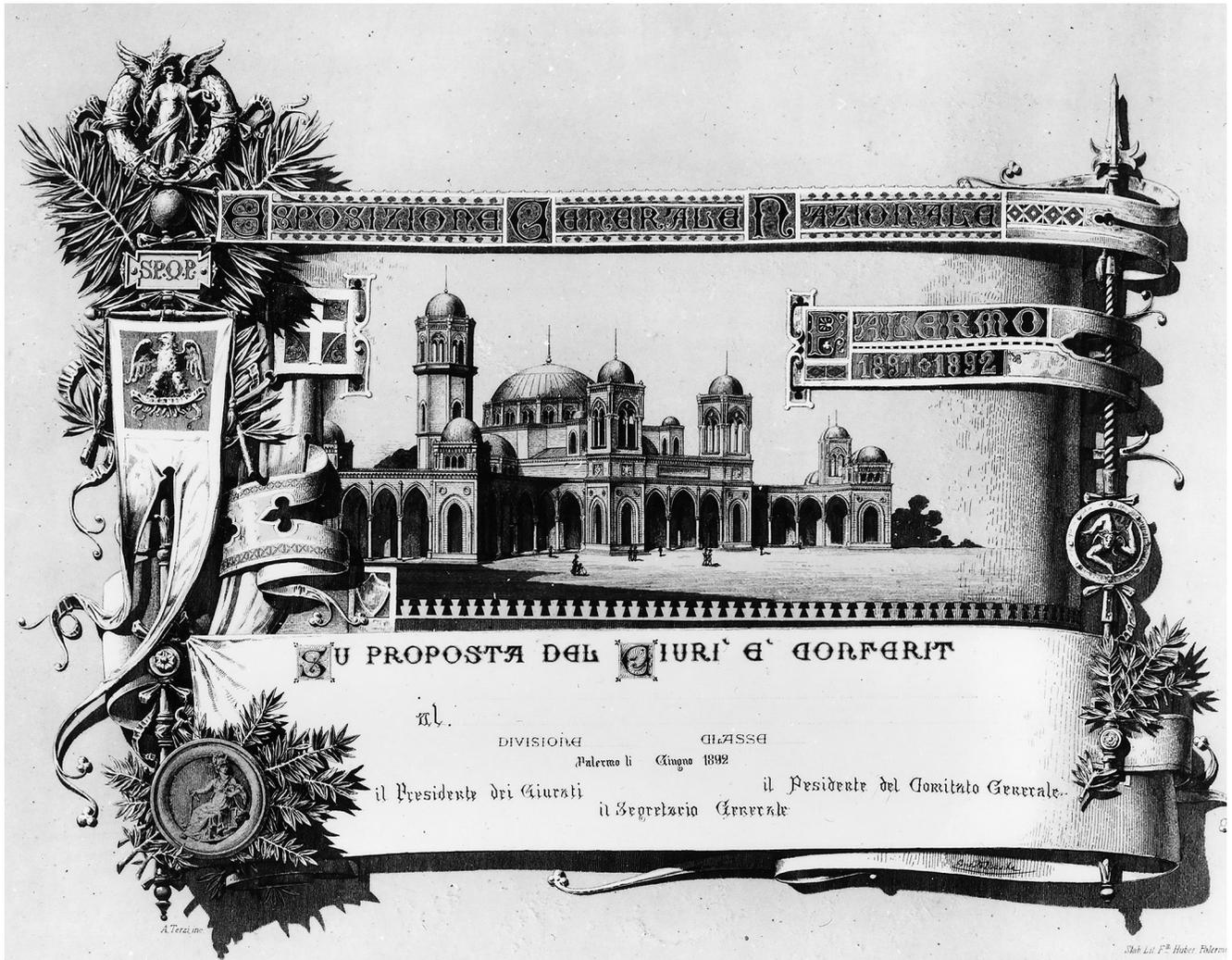


Figure 1 Buildings of the IV National Italian Exhibition of Arts and Industries of Palermo 1891, diploma of the Jury, signed Ernesto Basile (A. Terzi, inc., Stab. Lit. F.lli Huber, Palermo)

to identify and to group. However, domed chapels are not an invention of this period. In fact, several such chapels, the majority of them funerary, were built in the 15th and 16th centuries within churches,<sup>25</sup> which Maria Giuffrè grouped under the name of ‘domed chapels on niches’. The same author states that ‘the idea of a cubic volume surmounted by

Figure 2 La Galleria della Sicilia Monumentale e Artistica, Palermo National Exhibition (1891). The facsimile on the left represents one of the corbellings (or pendentives) of the cupola of the church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, presented by Nicolò Rutelli



a dome for use as a mausoleum is, on the one hand, of Islamic origin, widespread, with many variations, in North Africa’. She goes on to say: ‘In Norman Sicily the acceptance of Islamic experiences, in the group of domed churches, can be limited, in fact, to structural and spatial innovations which themselves become decorative material’,<sup>26</sup> referring specifically to the churches of San Cataldo and St Giovanni degli Eremiti.

The Masi chapel (1903) serves as a good, representative example of the group. This attractive funerary monument occupies a privileged position in a corner of Sant’Orsola cemetery’s main square, opposite the Santo Spirito Church’s front façade (Fig. 3). It is designed on a Greek cross-plan, supporting a drum surmounted by a dome, topped with a stone pinnacle (Fig. 4). At their upper level, the exterior walls have slightly projecting blind arches, inside of which are shallow recesses. The main arches at the centre of the lateral façades house grated windows, flanked by a smaller blind arch on each side (Fig. 5). The elegant entrance is distinguished by a pointed arch with a cushion voussoir springing from two marble columns (Fig. 6). There is a marble relief above the lintel. The back wall has blind arches; below them, a small door accesses the hypogeum. Inside, the chapel is simply decorated with columns at each corner and an altar surmounted by a marble crucifix. A



Figure 3 Entrance to the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirit cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)

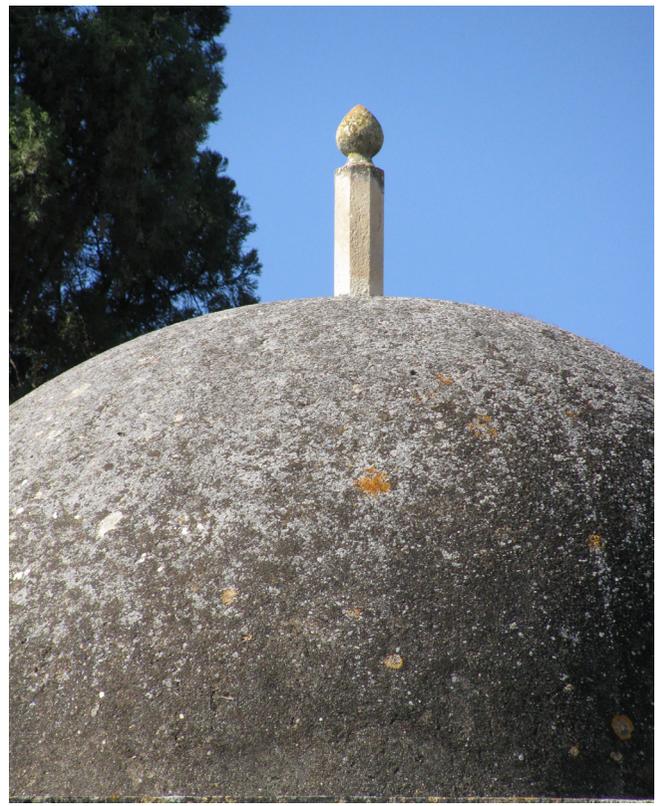


Figure 4 Detail of the pinnacle of the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirito cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)

monumental sculpture depicting a bronze angel holding a garland frames a marble bas-relief of the young man to whom the tomb is dedicated. The materials used are local limestone, marble and iron. As discussed below, the references to medieval Sicily are numerous.

An inscription running under the crenellations along the top of the monument states ‘FILIO DESIDERATISSIMO ET SIBI GEORGUS ET MARIA ANNA MASI ANNO DOMINI MCMIII’, which can be translated as ‘Giorgio and Annamaria Masi for their deeply missed son Anno Domini 1903’. From this we learn the date of the foundation (1903), the patrons (Giorgio Masi and his wife Annamaria) and to whom the chapel was dedicated (their son).

In 1999 Rosario Paone published an article in which he pointed out for the very first time that this chapel is of interest for its revival of the ‘Arab-Norman’ style and therefore should be placed in the context of Orientalism.<sup>27</sup> He also included pictures and a description of the chapel’s condition. In fact, for any scholar familiar with the Norman architecture of Sicily, a quick look at the chapel is enough to recognise the models that inspired its design. Paone identified the external decoration and structural prototypes in his article. I will add here my thoughts on the interior as well. The Norman revival inspiration can be seen, firstly, in the general impression of masonry built with visible blocks of stone and, secondly, in the geometric relationships that define the simplicity and symmetry of the entire structure. Looking more closely at these details, it is possible to trace their potential sources. The entrance arch is set on two marble columns and presents an intrados decorated with a cushion voussoir, a feature that appears in the arches on the third level of the Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio bell tower in

Palermo. The decoration on the outside walls, with their slightly protruding arches, recalls that on SS Trinità di Delia in Castelvetrano, another 12th-century Norman church, which was restored by Giuseppe Patricolo in 1880. The crenellations and the crowning of the façade with a broad band containing an inscription are close references to the decoration at San Cataldo in Palermo (Figs 7–8). The quadrangular structure that corresponds to the inner octagonal drum that supports the hemispherical dome seems to be an architectural solution also visible at SS Trinità di Delia. Finally, the pinnacle that decorates the top of the dome is identical to those of the Norman churches of San Giovanni degli Eremiti and San Giovanni dei Lebbrosi, both in Palermo (Figs 4, 9). The chapel’s interior, with its Greek cross-plan and marble columns set against the corners, recalls once again the church of SS Trinita di Delia. The latter can be found in San Cataldo in Palermo, which also appears to be the source for the decorative theme engraved on the marble slab on the altar front. The interior zone of transition between the square base and the circular dome is join by the use of squinches at the corners (Fig. 10), which seems to be yet another reference to SS Trinita di Delia (Fig. 11), as well as being found at San Giovanni degli Eremiti, a small-scale facsimile of which was displayed at the Palermo National Exhibition by Rutelli (Fig. 2).

In addition to the elements mentioned above, information on patrons, architects and builders was obtained from surveys and archival research, so as to further investigate the chapel’s significance and meaning. Of particular importance to the research were the meetings with the current heir of the chapel’s owners, Duchesse Chiara Fici, to discuss her family and the chapel’s significance within their



Figure 5 South side of the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirito cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)

Figure 6 Detail of the portal of the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirito cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)



history.<sup>28</sup> The conversations provided information about Gino Masi, to whom the chapel is dedicated, the only son of Giorgio and Annamaria Masi, and a detailed description of the genealogical family tree. In fact, although the chapel was built as a mausoleum following the painful loss of their son, the structure was designed to accommodate various burials. It includes that of Giorgio and his wife, as well as his brothers and sisters with their respective families. The discussions also highlighted the importance of this family's Sicilian/Albanian aristocratic roots,<sup>29</sup> underlining that they were warriors and not from among the inactive or indolent nobility. On an emotional level the Duchesse sees the chapel's design, with its Norman elements, as a reflection of the esteem for this period. Her family identified (and still identify) with the values of the Norman Hauteville warrior elite who, although they were invaders, were the only rulers throughout Sicilian history who strengthened the island's resources and made it prosper. The architectural language adopted for the chapel is both humble and severe, and therefore the task of expressing Christian emotion falls to the sculptural elements, such as the Virgin Mary in marble contained within the lunette above the portal, a marble crucifix in the apse area above the altar, and a monumental angel in marble and bronze. It is noteworthy that these works are of an extremely high artistic quality. The sculpture above the entrance is signed by Mario Rutelli (1859–1941),<sup>30</sup> a renowned sculptor, and the angel can be attributed to him as well.<sup>31</sup>

While the archival material for this chapel seems to have been lost, a dictionary of Sicilian architects mentions that the engineer Antonio La Manna<sup>32</sup> was the chapel's designer and Pietro Rutelli its builder.

### The architect

The architect–engineer Antonio La Manna distinguished himself by obtaining the highest grade for his dissertation at the Royal School of Engineering and Architecture in Palermo. Soon after, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Building Mechanics. His writings indicate that he was dedicated to the study of the latest modernist technological trends.<sup>34</sup> At the university in Palermo he taught a course on the application of modern materials, with specific reference to iron constructions, which he later published.<sup>35</sup> Of special interest here is his design and subsequent publication of the pulpit for the church of Santi Pietro e Paolo in Palermo.<sup>36</sup> First, La Manna names the people involved in this work: Professor Salemi Pace as the director, La Manna himself as the designer and Salvatore Valenti as the sculptor. He goes on to explain that the pulpit was placed against a column in order to occupy as little space as was possible within the church, and discusses the technical complexities, describing in detail the iron structure necessary to secure and support the pulpit. Finally, he explains the choice of the pulpit's style, which was designed to be in harmony with the medieval character of the church, and was inspired by the tastes of the 14th century, particularly in trying to imitate the best woodwork of that era.

La Manna's article gives us a glimpse of how the drawings and the project developed into the final result. Moreover, although referring to a different building, the



**Figure 7** Detail of the crowning decoration of the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirito cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)



**Figure 8** Detail of the crowning decoration of San Cataldo (1154–66), Palermo (photo: author)

process in this context, where a faithful historicist revival was required, is also recognisable in the Masi chapel design. Furthermore, even for the Masi chapel the architect did not refer to just one prototype, but sought inspiration from the best examples of the Sicilian-Norman period. Interestingly, La Manna also designed another, similar chapel in Santa Maria di Gesù cemetery, which was made for a different branch of the Masi family.

#### **The builders and the sculptor**

The value of this chapel is evident in the high standard of its execution, from its structural to its decorative elements, and the use of materials that, thanks to their qualities, have resisted the passage of time. The craftsmen were of crucial importance; the architect entrusted the work to Pietro Rutelli, son of Giovanni Rutelli and brother of Nicolò and Mario, the latter creating most of the sculptures.

The entire family seems to have been involved if one considers that the squinches and dome recall the models presented and described by Nicolò during the Palermo National Exhibition. This use of stone in the construction of this type of chapel, which demanded the survival of highly sophisticated craft skills, is an important cultural feature. Unfortunately, it was this ultimate architectural feat that a little later would disappear and be replaced by the use of cement, a considerably cheaper material and one requiring a less skilled process.

#### **The patron**

The patron of the chapel, Giorgio Masi, commissioned this beautiful mausoleum in 1903 as a family chapel, due to the untimely death of his only son Gino who died at the age of 20. His parents' sorrow is evident from the stone inscription occupying the top of the front façade of the chapel. As

**Figure 9** Detail of the pinnacle of San Giovanni degli Eremiti (1132–48), Palermo (photo: author)





**Figure 10** Interior of the dome of the Masi chapel (1903), Santo Spirito cemetery, Palermo (photo: author)

mentioned, the chapel contains several other tombs, including that of Giorgio Masi himself, ‘a former senator of the Kingdom, born in Piana dei Greci, on 9 November 1835, and died in Palermo May 30, 1915’. As a ‘senator of the kingdom’, documents recording his life and commemorating his death are preserved in the Italian state archives:

Giuseppe Manfredi, President . . . Senator Giorgio Masi was an outstanding Magistrate, a talented jurist, one of the highest members of the judiciary, the first president of the Court of Cassation in Palermo, where he died on 30 May. Born in Piana near Palermo, on 8 November 1836, he demonstrated great talent at school; once he finished his studies with honours, he was chosen in 1860 as rapporteur at the State Council of Sicily, and to serve in the Ministry of Justice; soon after he started as a civil judge in the courts. After being promoted to public prosecutor, in 1863 he achieved the rank of Deputy Attorney General in Catanzaro. He was requested to cover the role of State attorney in Palermo in 1876, which he held for over a decade; and, back in the judiciary, he was first councillor for the

Court of Cassation of Palermo, then that of Rome. The subsequent well-deserved promotions eventually took him to the presidencies over the appeal courts of Lucca and Palermo; and in Palermo in 1905 he rose to the high office at the Supreme Court, where he was revered until his death. In the same year 1905, the Royal Decree of 4 March raised him to the Senate. Many assemblies painfully feel the loss.<sup>37</sup>

Giorgio’s place of birth is relevant in order to trace and understand his roots. The town in the province of Palermo known as Piana degli Albanesi<sup>38</sup> (in which the Masi family played an important role) was known as Piana dei Greci until 1941, when it changed to its current name. The original name dates from the late 15th century when there was an influx of Albanian refugees, who at the time were referred to by the local population as Greeks on account of their Orthodox faith, and the settlement was thus called ‘Plain of the Greeks’. This may explain the chapel’s Greek cross-plan as well as its outer wall decoration, which seems to reference to the Church of SS Trinità di Delia (Castelvetrano). This religious building, like many others in Val Demone, was started as a Basilian church following the Greek rite, which was attached to a convent and built with the support of the Norman King Roger II (1095–1154).<sup>39</sup> Currently, however, there is not enough evidence to prove this point.

### Conclusion

The Masi chapel reveals unique elements reflecting the patron’s wishes and the architect’s and mason’s skills. For example, the architect, La Manna, applied the *modus operandi* that had been suggested, a few decades earlier, by the architect Camillo Boito (1836–1914), who applauded the 1884 Esposizione Generale Italiana in Turin. He suggested a compositional process, assembling parts of different buildings but of the same time period, in order to create an ‘original’ revival.<sup>40</sup> The way La Manna designed the Masi chapel therefore illustrates a sort of eclecticism in historicism, in the sense that he quoted a specific period and geographical area, but did not take inspiration from one building exclusively. He composed a structure inspired by different monuments of the same ‘style’. If the ‘Byzantine-



**Figure 11** Interior of the dome of the Church of SS Trinità di Delia (1140–60), Castelvetrano (photo: author)

Islamic-Norman style' chosen by Masi was considered exotic by the rest of Italy, it was indigenous to the island of Sicily and used here as a claim for cultural identity.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the specific style was chosen for its strong symbolic meaning, to identify the owners with the Normans as restorers of Christianity to the island.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, the numerous references to the Church of Santissima Trinità di Delia seem to suggest a strong connection with Giorgio Masi's roots. The fact that he was born in Piana degli Albanesi, where the Greek rite was considered a fundamental aspect of the population's identity, is important. The use of local limestone and the extraordinary quality of the final work also suggest how significant this funerary monument was at this time. In fact, in funerary architecture the celebratory demands of the family identity combine with it being a tribute to the deceased. In this revival case, the use of historical sources is justified by the logic and the emotion behind them.

To sum up, the Masi chapel, like several others, is part of a larger revival phenomenon that occurred in Sicily during the 19th and 20th centuries. As funerary monuments, they have a better chance of surviving the inevitable changes that affect the urban evolution of any city, in which numerous revivalist and eclectic buildings are continuously destroyed to allow for reorganisation and planning. However, their importance is much broader than merely serving as preservers of history for the families who commissioned them. They are visible statements of architects' projects and 'living' witnesses for the skilled craftsmen who built them.

## Notes

- 1 This chapel is part of a PhD research project that investigated the connection between Norman revival and Orientalism through a study of funerary architecture in Sicily in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 2 Tomaselli 1994.
- 3 Conner 1979.
- 4 Several scholars have analysed this phenomenon, for example, Sweetman 1988, and Danby 1995 regarding Britain and France; and Fontana 1992, 285–95, for Italy.
- 5 Girault de Prangey 1836–39; Girault de Prangey 1841.
- 6 Jones 1842; Jones 1854.
- 7 Coste 1839.
- 8 Prisse d'Avennes 1877.
- 9 'As representatives of Islamic urban settings, Ottoman and Egyptian quarters were placed adjacent to each other in 1867 in Paris. . . visitors could meander through the Egyptian street into the Turkish square': Çelik 1992, 58. Islamic pavilions featured at the universal exhibitions in Vienna (1873), Paris (1878, 1889 and 1900) and Chicago (1893).
- 10 Regarding this idea and how the meaning of the words 'style' and 'type' changed in this period, see Patetta 1991. For the association with building type, see also Sweetman 1988.
- 11 Sweetman 1998, 253.
- 12 Basile 1882, 10–11: 'Sicily, situated in the center of the Mediterranean, turning a beach to Greece, another to the continent and a third to Africa, in the mixture of the two Romanesque and Byzantine styles had to accommodate the Arabic element, and these three styles fused together gave rise to an architecture that clearly explains the various influences to which the island's artistic movement was subjected'.
- 13 Quoted in Basile 1880, 68: 'The general architectural style is that of the medieval art of Sicily, which was well defined Roman-Byzantine-Arab-Norman-Sicilian'.
- 14 Boito 1880, 68. Camillo Boito (1836–1914) was an Italian architect and engineer, as well as a renowned art critic, art historian and leading figure in the conservation of monuments.
- 15 Giuffrè 2000, 143–79; Nobile 2006, 53–58.
- 16 The Duke of Serradifalco was a prominent figure among Sicilian historians and a pioneer in surveys and studies of Sicilian monuments from ancient to modern periods. He represented a local version of those scholars who combined classical and modern studies, shifting between an interest in classical polychrome and the genesis of Gothic architecture. He hosted and helped many foreign scholars who travelled to Sicily on their Grand Tour.
- 17 Dufourny 1991.
- 18 Michele Amari was a historian who devoted his life to the history of Sicily, and served as Italy's first minister of public education. Amari is also considered an Orientalist, as many of his works focused on Sicily while it was under Arab control, from the 9th to the 11th centuries. He became one of 19th-century Europe's premier translators of medieval Arabic writings.
- 19 Basile was one of the chief Sicilian architects of the 19th century, who was able to interpret with erudition and sensitivity the major European artistic movements and translate them into a local architectural language.
- 20 On the Palermo National Exhibition, see Sonzogno 1892; Fratelli Treves, ed. 1891–2; La Grutta 1991; Alfano 1891; Di Cristina and Li Vigni 1988.
- 21 For the Rutelli family, see Greco 2007, 18: ' . . . family of artists and stone masons, Rutelli were from the beginning of the nineteenth century the protagonists of an intense season of restoration and construction of monuments, entertaining with the institutions and the great masters of the time a fruitful and privileged partnership'.
- 22 Rutelli 1891, 4–6.
- 23 Samonà 1990, 1–31.
- 24 Samonà, 1990, 1: 'They have always stopped at the threshold of the stylistic quality assessment, . . . without deepening the meaning and purposes'. These stylistic labels do not help in understanding architecture'
- 25 Before burials inside churches and cities were forbidden by Napoleon in 1804 (Edict of Saint-Cloud).
- 26 Giuffrè 1996, 37.
- 27 Paone 1999, 65–85.
- 28 Interviews with the Duchesse Chiara Fici in Masi, the owner of the chapel and descendant of the Masi family, happened on several occasions, the first of which took place at the cemetery on 7 October 2014. I received permission to go inside the chapel to take pictures and carry out a survey. The interviews clarified and confirmed information that was found in archival documents.
- 29 The Duchesse showed precious Albanian costumes from her ancestors, published also in: De Marco and Elmo 1990.
- 30 For more information on the sculptor Mario Rutelli, see Grasso 1989; Messina 1998, 112–29; Grasso 1998.
- 31 On a recent visit to the chapel the architect Salvo Greco and sculptor Salvatore Rizzuti confirmed the likely attribution to Mario Rutelli, although the signature could not be found. The attribution is further confirmed by an article in the newspaper *L'Ora* of 4 June 1932. In a section dedicated to the sculptor Mario Rutelli, who created the bronze monument of the heroine Anita Garibaldi, a 'monumento a Masi adorno della Giustizia' is

- mentioned, which is a likely reference to the bronze sculpture inside the chapel. (I am indebted to Salvatore Greco for this information.)
- 32 Luigi Sarullo, *Dizionario degli artisti siciliani, Architettura*, Palermo 1993. In the early years of the 20th century Sarullo recorded many works by Antonio La Manna.
- 33 Pietro, who was born in Palermo on 1 June 1874 and died in Rome on 16 March 1938, was the lesser-known brother of Nicolò, Mario and Salvatore. Personal communication from the architect Salvatore Greco.
- 34 La Manna 1880, 68–85. La Manna also created a map of Palermo showing all the churches, theatres and other monumental buildings, published in Barbera Azzarello 1980, 2, 285.
- 35 La Manna 1883.
- 36 La Manna 1889, 7–8.
- 37 Author's translation. Original accessed August 7, 2017 through: <http://notes9.senato.it/web/senregno.nsf/2a9c00aad2bca710c125711400599e36/a57e918cce6d85ed4125646f005d3dc7?OpenDocument>
- 38 The name Piana degli Albanesi or 'Plain of the Albanians' is a literal translation of the local Arbëreshë name: Hora e Arbëreshëvet. The town is the most important and populous Albanian (Arbëreshë) settlement in Sicily and it is the episcopal seat of the Italo-Albanian Byzantine Church, which, even five centuries after its foundation, still preserves its ethnic-linguistic identity. Piana degli Albanesi was established in the late 15th century by a large group of Albanian refugees who travelled from the Balkans during the conquest of the latter by the Ottomans. The exodus began after the defeat of the Byzantine Empire and the death of George Skanderbeg, who had successfully fought for the freedom of the Albanian people for more than two decades. During the 19th century the Arbëreshë of Piana degli Albanesi played a significant role in the fight for Italian unification, and participated in the Fasci Siciliani movement.
- 39 Mauro *et al.* 2004, 208–10.
- 40 La Duca *et al.* 1991, 10.
- 41 See also the paper by P. Palazzotto in this volume.
- 42 This aspect was emphasised by the Duchesse.
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